

JUSTICE FOR INDIA.

A LETTER

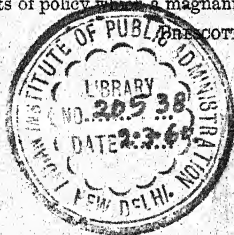
TO

LORD PALMERSTON.

BY A PLAIN SPEAKER.

"There are some acts of policy which a magnanimous spirit only can execute."

McCort's "*Conquest of Mexico*."



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JUSTICE FOR INDIA.

To the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Palmerston.

MY LORD,

IF ever there were a question which it behoved a nation to exercise a dispassionate judgment upon, it is that great question which now possesses all minds, agitates all hearts, and is the theme of all tongues—*India*. But, unhappily, there are mixed up with that question so many circumstances calculated to lead the best and most thoughtful minds astray,—national pride, traditional beliefs, traditional hopes, imperfect knowledge, and angry passions,—that it requires no slight effort, in reasoning upon it, to hold fast by the cardinal maxims of wisdom, justice, and humanity. On every side, from ministers of state, from members of Parliament, from the pulpit, the platform, the press, resounds the cry,—Cost what it may, let us spend our last shilling and our last soldier upon it, British supremacy must be re-established in the East-Indies; the “foul treason” of the sepoys must be met as befits the countrymen of Clive and Hastings; and an awful and exemplary vengeance must

be taken for the enormities of which the rebels have been guilty. Certain phrases, acceptable to our national self-complacency, and happily safe from answer in their very vagueness and generality, pass current among us as unquestionable truths; whilst doubt and criticism are regarded with aversion and disdain, and are quickly drowned by the uproar of a million voices. In short, at the present moment, it is held to be almost treason to our country to ask to be satisfied on the two simple and obvious points which present themselves at the very threshold of this momentous question: First, what are we fighting for? Secondly, is our cause a just one? Thus, in presence of a question which would seem, from the important consequences it is fraught with, to call for all our prescience and wisdom, to demand a ready hearing for every new suggestion, and to require us to look anxiously both before and behind, we are acting just as a man would do, who plunged headlong into an expensive lawsuit, without one thought as to the value of the property he sought to recover, as to the cost of recovering it, or the justice of his title to it.

I cannot consent, my Lord, to act thus blindly. I am not of the number of those who preach up peace at any price: that doctrine I leave to men (if any such there be) who would not defend their own homes against midnight robbers, or would lie quietly in their beds whilst a neighbour's alarm-bell is ringing loudly for aid. So little, indeed, have I in common with these new-fangled notions, that I can even conceive a just war to have a wholesome

and purifying influence upon the character of a nation, by proposing to men who have been habitually engaged in the pursuit of gain, and of mere material advantages, a cause which appeals to the better and higher feelings of human nature, which demands their indignation at wrong, their sympathy with right, and calls upon them to do and to suffer, without any immediate reference to themselves. But, before I can cordially enter into a war, I must know that the object for which I am to spend my blood and my treasure is really worth the sacrifice. What concerns me, too, still more nearly, I must likewise know that the object itself is a just and honourable one,—one on which impartial posterity will set the irrevocable seal of its sanction.

I ask then, my Lord, of what worth to us is this Indian empire, for the maintenance of which we are now engaged in so bloody and costly a war? Is that empire indeed, as the phrase goes, the brightest jewel in her Majesty's crown; or is it, as some suspect, only a paste diamond, a glittering sham? And, whatever may be the answer to this question, I ask still more earnestly—Is the present war a JUST ONE? What *right* have we to India? What *right* had we, or have we, to conquer India?

In answer to the first question, I may at all events positively affirm that this country is not, in the slightest degree, benefited in its public finances by the large revenue, amounting to upwards of twenty millions sterling, which the East-India Company annually raises in India. For, as your Lordship knows (though it is not so well known

generally as it ought to be), every rupee of that revenue is applied, and justly so, in defraying the various expenses, civil and military, of the Indian Government. What is more, this revenue has hitherto been found insufficient to satisfy those expenses, and the East-India Company has, in consequence, from time to time, been obliged to borrow large sums to supply the deficiency, and has thus contracted a debt which amounts, at the present time, to upwards of sixty-two millions. I am aware that there are persons who say, that when the present rebellion is subdued, we shall have two hundred millions of people completely at our mercy, and that we shall then have the power, and ought to avail ourselves of it, of levying upon them, in twofold measure, the taxes which they have been hitherto in the habit of paying. This, however, is vain talk, and only evinces the ignorance, and, let me add, the unscrupulousness, of those who indulge in it; for your Lordship need not be told that the East Indies are not that El Dorado which tradition and the popular imagination suppose them to be, but a land of miserable rice-eaters, who, for the most part, are only just able to satisfy the bare wants of nature, and, that done, have hardly anything left to hand over to the tax-gatherers. We have hitherto flattered ourselves (I think we have *flattered* ourselves) that the great mass of our Indian subjects have not partaken of the rebellious spirit which has just driven the whole native army of Bengal into open rebellion; but, depend upon it, that *if* this be the case now, it would not be the case much longer

were we to attenuate, by fresh extortions, the poor Indian's present pittance of the necessities of life. Patient and unenterprising as his debilitating climate and long secular habits of submission have made him, such an experiment would be more dangerous than profitable, and would perhaps end in teaching us, that two hundred millions of people, howbeit Hindoos, are not to be driven to despair with impunity. In fact, the natives already pay their taxes sullenly and grudgingly, and we have it upon the authority of a "blue book" recently given by the House of Lords to the world, that it is not uncommon for the fiscal agents of the Company to enforce their claims by practices so cruel and obscene, that it is impossible to hear of them without a shudder and a blush. Away, then, with the notion that any part of the Indian revenue will ever find its way into the English treasury! But, alas, can I at the same time say—Away with the notion that any part of the English revenue will ever find its way into the Indian treasury? No, assuredly no; so far from it, indeed, that it is now the common talk, that one of the first measures in the present session of Parliament must be to impose a charge upon us good people at home, in order to replenish the East-India Company's rapidly sinking exchequer. And we may feel as sure of it as though the thing had already happened, that if the government of India, as seems very likely, should be transferred to the Crown, we shall see figuring, every year, in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's budget, a formidable sum to be paid out of *our*

purses towards the support of the Indian Government. It would, indeed, surprise no one who knows anything of the matter, if, when the year 1860 arrives, and we impatiently remind ministers of their promise to release us from the income-tax, we were quietly told, in reply, that we must make up our minds to bear that grievous impost *for ever*, as a necessary condition of keeping on foot the large military force required for maintaining our authority in the East Indies. *It appears, then, my Lord, that our Indian empire, whatever good it may do for us in other respects, promises us anything but financial aid: we may impose our yoke upon India, but we can extort no tribute from her; she is so far protected by her poverty from our rapacity.

It is not difficult, my Lord, to show that another capital benefit, which we are supposed to derive from our Indian empire, has been, to say the least, greatly exaggerated, and, perhaps, has no existence at all. We, who trade with France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, the United States, the Brazils, Peru, and a thousand other countries, where we have not, and never dream of having, and do not wish to have, a single square mile of territory in dominion,—we (or, at all events, a good many of us), strange to say, fancy that our Indian commerce is indissolubly connected with our Indian empire, and that if we lose the latter, we must lose the former. That such a notion should have prevailed in former times, when a crude political economy relied on monopoly, and protection, and Government interference, for commercial prosperity, was natural

enough, but it is assuredly very much out of place in an age which has been taught, both by experience, and by the profound wisdom of the great masters who have treated on the wealth of nations, that commerce is always most flourishing where it is most left to take care of itself. The commerce we carry on with the East Indies, is, I may safely affirm, advantageous to both the parties concerned in it. We export to India, cotton fabrics, hardware, and various other manufactured commodities, to the amount of about eight millions sterling; and we receive, in return, from India, indigo, raw cotton, and silk, rice, tropical spices, and various other natural productions of the soil of our dependency, to somewhere about the same amount; the deficiency, if there be any, being made up by remittances in specie. What more natural than such an exchange of commodities! The people of India want the commodities which they import from us, and cannot get them anywhere else so cheap; we want the commodities which we import from them, and, likewise, cannot get them anywhere else so cheap. Surely such a commerce—a commerce which seems to draw both parties together by an irresistible attraction—would equally exist and flourish whether the two hundred millions who people Hindostan, and whom we, rather oddly, call the subjects of Queen Victoria, were under her dominion or not. And here, my Lord, I cannot help reminding you, that when the (as we now believe) happy revolt of our American colonies was crowned with success, and, in the plenitude of their independence, they

were free to do what they chose, their commerce with us was neither stopped nor stinted, but, on the contrary, went on flowing from year to year in a constantly increasing volume.

But, let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that the sword, and not mutual interest, is the only possible mode of propagating and sustaining our commerce with the East Indies, and, consequently, that our dominion over the East Indies gone, our Indian commerce must go likewise—what then? Why, even in this improbable event, we should, commercially, be but little the worse for it, since we should still have in our hands the cotton fabrics, the hardware goods, and the other commodities, which we formerly exported to the East Indies, as the price of the goods we imported thence, and with these, or with other articles, the fruits of the labour and capital which produced these, we should have the means of purchasing elsewhere the commodities which emancipated India, to her own great detriment, is supposed to refuse to us. True, I may be met with the objection, that the mere fact that we procure certain articles in the East Indies, is, of itself, a proof that we cannot procure those articles so cheap anywhere else, since mercantile orders, by a law almost as certain as that of gravitation, always seek the cheapest markets. I admit this, and the conclusion to be drawn from it, that the new trade, in the supposed case, would not be *quite* so advantageous to us as the one for which it was substituted; in other words, the articles which we now obtain from India, but which we should then be obliged to

obtain elsewhere, would cost us somewhat more abroad, and must therefore, to yield the same profit to the importer, be sold for somewhat more at home than is the case at present. This, no doubt, so far as it went, would be a disadvantage to us; still, instead of being, as some seem to think, a mortal wound to the commercial prosperity of this country, it would be but a scratch, hardly felt, and soon healed. To conquer, and to keep in subjection two hundred millions of people, is a momentous work, which (putting aside for the moment all considerations of justice and humanity) ought not to be undertaken for any purpose not of the highest national importance; and assuredly it ought not to be undertaken for the sake of the difference between a little more, or a little less, in some one branch of a commerce which embraces the world. Wisdom requires that the magnitude of the end should always bear a just proportion to the means. It does not bear that just proportion, however, where the means are innumerable battles and sieges, and the end (itself a problematical one) is only a somewhat more advantageous trade in silks and indigo.

I admit, my Lord, that no inconsiderable loss and distress would be occasioned to the civil and military officers of the Company were our Indian empire to be dissolved. But surely no one will say that we ought to keep that empire on foot solely for the sake of the officers who are engaged in its service. Happily, moreover, those officers form an exceedingly small fraction of our population, not more than one person out of many thousands being dependent

upon the Indian exchequer for a livelihood. And even these, it should not be forgotten, give equivalent services for what they receive, and consequently would, for the most part, be able, were they deprived of their present places, to bestow the same services elsewhere—some with more, some with less, effect—some, perhaps, even improving their fortunes by the change, others, on the contrary, being seriously impoverished by it. I can readily, indeed, conceive, that many an Indian officer who has been lately serving in the field under a fierce vertical sun, or has been pining away with bile and *ennui* in some remote garrison or station, in the midst of a population with whom he has no sympathy, and who have no sympathy with him, would be right well pleased to exchange his high Indian pay for a far smaller salary, to be earned by him in the genial climate, and agreeable society, of England. The truth is, the salaries which the Indian Government pays to its British officers are only a compensation for the loss sustained by those officers in quitting the various pursuits of gain by which they could have earned their livings at home. As things have been, a man who has taken office under the Company, has given his services and received his pay; as things would have been, had there been no Company, the same man would have stayed at home and busied himself there in the general work of production going forward,—directly or indirectly creating wealth, and spending or saving it, when created, as he chose. In either case, he would really support himself by

the exercise of his own brains or hands ; in neither case, would he be a burden to the community.

But, though India threatens to be a financial burthen, and not a relief to us ; though our Indian commerce certainly does not require to be fostered or sustained by the hand of a conqueror, and if it did, would hardly be worth having at such a price ; and though, in a national point of view, it matters but little that our Indian government affords employment to a certain number of well-paid officials ; it may still be asked, whether it be possible that our imperial supremacy over two hundred millions of people should not make us a greater power in the world. The popular belief undoubtedly is that it does ; and some of our newspapers have even gone the length of declaring that, if England should lose India, she would sink into a third-rate power ; thus making the strength of England to lie in the East-Indies, that is, in a huge and, I will say it, unnatural excrescence on the body politic, and not in the body politic itself. Indeed, if England, stripped of India, and left to her natural position, and domestic resources, would be only a second or third-rate power, it follows that you have only to give India to Belgium, Sardinia, or Greece, and forthwith, Belgium, Sardinia, or Greece, would enlarge to the dimensions of a first-rate power.

Let us see, my Lord, what grounds there are for the popular belief on this point. When it is said that our Eastern empire makes us a greater power in the world, I presume it is meant that it makes

us a greater power in our own natural and proper sphere, namely, AS A EUROPEAN STATE. Now, is this the case? Has it ever been the case? *Can* it ever be the case? That it is not the case at the present time, every one who will give the matter a moment's consideration must, I am sure, admit; and there is no one who knows it better than your Lordship, who watches with so learned an eye all the fitful phenomena pertaining to our foreign relations. In fact, our Eastern empire is now so heavy and exhausting a drain upon our military resources, and is so completely occupying whatever attention we can give to matters of public interest, that England may almost be looked upon as blotted, for the time, from the map of Europe. We no longer inquire—we can hardly be said to care—what is going on in France, in Austria, in Turkey, in Italy; and were it otherwise, we feel instinctively that, circumstanced as we are, we cannot interfere without betraying our impotence, and exposing ourselves to ridicule. What mischief may have been brewed by the two imperial plotters who lately met at Stuttgart to whisper into one another's ears, God knows; but we may feel sure that they did not put their heads together there for any purpose of which England can approve. Happen what may, however, we have India to think of, and must therefore be humble and submissive. What if honour forbids this, prudence commands it; and, alas! prudence, that meanest and most doubtful of the virtues, is permitted to take precedence of all the others in these days. Let Alexander, upon

some new pretence, artfully devised between himself and his now fast friend, but late formidable enemy, the Emperor of the French, once more cross the Pruth, and march upon Constantinople, and we must, perforce, look on with indifference, or, at the most, deliver ourselves of some vapid and hesitating protest, which the invader would see (if, to prevent mistake, we did not even tell him) meant anything rather than war, and another siege of Sebastopol, and which he would therefore only read to despise and defy. Let Francis Joseph precipitate his legions upon Piedmont, and, after a new battle of Novara, reduce that now free and prosperous state to the abject condition of an Austrian province, and we may pity, but must not aid the victim, or threaten the oppressor. Let our "loyal and august ally" make that plunge upon Belgium which, it is well known, he meditated at the time of his *coup d'état*, and we must, in fear and trembling, fain believe, or seem to believe, that it is all done from the best and noblest of motives; happy that he leaves our own shores unmolested,—happy, that our militia have not to fight his Zouaves and Imperial Guard in Kent or Sussex, whilst our soldiers of the line, far from the real battles of their country, are fighting the Hindoos, ten thousand miles off, on the banks of the Ganges or the Indus. And all this danger, all this weakness, is owing to that very Indian dominion which we have been assiduously taught to regard as a main source of our greatness as a nation, until the belief has become a fundamental article of our political

faith, which it is little short of treason to call in question. In truth, if we oppress India, India oppresses us; if we are to have a supremacy in India, it must be on condition of our bowing to the supremacy of some other state in Europe.

If it should be said that India will soon be reconquered by us, and that, with our arms once more at liberty, woe betide the nation that may have dared to insult or to injure us, my answer is, that if India were reconquered (and it is not done yet), you have still to govern and to keep in subjection the two hundred millions of people on whom you have imposed your yoke. We have hitherto believed that the people of India have been well satisfied with our supremacy, regarding us rather in the light of benefactors than of conquerors and oppressors. But it must surely be impossible even for the most determined optimist, in presence of the events of the last six months, not to have some misgivings as to the soundness of this notion. True, so inexhaustible are the resources of self-complacency, it has been the fashion amongst us to represent the revolt of the sepoys as a mere military affair, with which the people of India have had no concern, and which they regard even with dislike. But, whatever diplomatic habits may tutor your Lordship's lips to *say*, your Lordship, I am sure, cannot really believe that a great army of 100,000 native Indian soldiers could, without concert, *and without even the pretence of any military grievance*, have risen up in revolt here, there, and everywhere throughout the vast territory of India, unless they

had been urged forward by some strong popular sentiment,—unless they had known that their own countrymen would hail their mutiny as a patriotic effort to deliver the land of their fathers from the yoke of the stranger. But, my Lord, putting aside this overwhelming reason for believing that the *people* of India sympathize with the revolted soldiery, there are not wanting many other circumstances, all leading, more or less directly, to the same conclusion. Look, for instance, at the numerous improvised bands of rebels that are scattered about the country, and which, though constantly beaten and dispersed, are to all appearances constantly multiplying themselves; now “exciting alarm” in this place—now “threatening” that,—never doing much in the way of battle, but always a good deal to tantalize and harass our troops. Look, too, at the incessant scourings of the country by small bodies of our soldiers, who, from their own reports, march from village to village, leaving behind them, as trophies, the houses in flames, and a ghastly row of villagers hanging as “rebels” on trees by the roadside. We have, besides, further evidence of the same kind in a curious penal project, which, we are told by the Calcutta correspondent of the *Times*, “is understood to express the general idea,” and which contains the three following articles:—“First: That every rebel* who has taken up arms shall die.

* In a previous article, the project condemns every “mutineer” to death; by “rebel,” therefore, we must understand every man who has not served as a soldier.

Secondly: That in every *village* where an Englishman has been murdered, a telegraph cut, or a dāk stolen, a swift tribunal shall execute summary justice.* Thirdly: That every *village* in which a European has been insulted or refused aid shall be heavily fined." Moreover, we know that the great metropolitan city of Delhi was one unleavened mass of disaffection towards us; a fact which no one, I presume, will call in question, who remembers General Wilson's proclamation to his army before the storm of the doomed city,—that terrible proclamation, which, by significantly calling upon the British troops to spare women and children, gave up to their bayonets *all* grown men, citizens as well as soldiers. What is still more directly to the purpose, we have it from General Havelock himself that on his first march from Cawnpore upon Lucknow he found every cottage turned into a place of arms, and defended by the villagers with a resolution which showed that their hearts were in the cause for which they were fighting. And we know that, since then, the whole population of Oude has risen in arms against us,† though certain, in the

* This, no doubt, means to set fire to the place, and hang its chief inhabitants. .

† Why has there been a more general manifestation of the spirit of revolt in Oude than in any other province of India? Several reasons have been assigned for this phenomenon; but the most obvious one has been generally overlooked, namely, that in Oude the presence of a great native army gives countenance to the popular aspirations, and emboldens the discontented to show themselves. Put that army in any other part of India, and we should, I believe, witness the same ferment of the public mind.

event of failure, of receiving *less* mercy from their conquerors than was given to the insurgent patriots of the Low Countries by the remorseless Alva. One more fact shall complete my proof of the general sympathy with the cause of the insurgents; it is, that the different military contingents, furnished under treaties by certain of the native princes, have been for the most part as forward in the revolt as our own sepoys. Even the faithful Holkar has not been able to preserve his troops from the contagion of revolt; and it is a significant fact, that the only serious reverse we have sustained during the present war has been inflicted by the contingent* of a prince who used all his efforts to keep his men true to us, and used them in vain. Is it possible, then, to believe that the popular feeling in the provinces from which these contingents have been drawn is not strongly averse to our rule? As to the princes themselves, they have, it is said, for the most part, kept aloof from the conflict; not, however, as we may well suppose, because they have any great liking for a foreign power which is constantly thwarting, humbling, and impoverishing them, but because they cannot easily believe that the same good fortune which has hitherto always crowned our arms in Indian wars will desert us now. But dissimulation is a conspicuous feature in the Indian character. Let us not forget that Nana Sahib was our humble servant, our fast friend, until the moment when it suited him to throw

* The Gwalior army.

aside his mask, and show his real face. So Maun Singh was under an engagement to join Havelock and Outram immediately on their arrival at Lucknow; but, lo! instead of joining them he joined the enemy. Depend upon it, my Lord, that however it may now suit them "to put an antic disposition on," there are many amongst the native princes and great landowners of India whose long-suppressed impatience of our dominion is only waiting for an opportunity to explode. I *cannot* blame them for it. No, it is hardly possible that it should not be the constant aspiration of the whole Indian people—high and low, rich and poor, prince and villager—to reconquer their independence from strangers, who come from a far-distant country—who, in race, religion, language, and manners, have no affinity with themselves—and who, to use Lord Ellenborough's language, "stalk through their land as conquerors."

Such, then, being the temper, such the natural, and, let me add, the just ambition of the Indian people,—how are we to maintain our dominion over them? The answer is obvious: it must be by the sword; it must be by a permanent and overpowering military occupation of the country. But that sword must not be committed to the hands of the natives; that military occupation must be our own especial task. In other words, we must always have a great army in India, and that army must be an army of Englishmen. And what number of soldiers will suffice for the purpose? Say, shall it be 60,000, or 80,000, or 100,000; or, setting no

limit at all, shall it be as many as the utmost resources of the country will permit, and as the exigency for the time being may require? When I consider the prodigious resources of this country, I see clearly enough that we can maintain our power in the East Indies against the utmost efforts which the natives, *if unassisted*, may make to shake off our yoke; but sure I am that we cannot hold military occupation of that vast territory by means of an English army, except at the expense of that natural authority, dignity, and almost supremacy, which we have hitherto always enjoyed in Europe. How, then, in the name of wonder, can it be said that we add to our power as a nation by a policy, which, whilst enabling us to give the law to the Sikhs, the Bheels, the Ghoorkas, the Rohillas, and the Mahrattas, may compel us to take the law from some arrogant neighbour in Europe?

The universal exclamation now is, "Thank God this mutiny did not break out whilst we were in the thick of the Russian war!" But what security have we, should these Indian troubles continue, that they may not, at last, become complicated with European embroilments? When, upwards of eighty years ago, the dispute with our American colonies waxed warm, our grandfathers talked much as we do now, of the utter futility of all resistance on the part of the malcontent colonists, and of the imperious necessity, if we regarded either our honour or our interest, not to permit the crown to be robbed of its choicest jewels, to wit these same colonies; but "*to strain every nerve to bring them back to their*

*duty, and to secure to us their subordinate dependence.**
Read, my Lord, the pamphlets that were written, and

* In a debate on the Boston Ports Bill, in 1774, Lord Mansfield said, "What passed in Boston is the last overt act of high treason, proceeding from our over-lenity and want of foresight. It is, however, the luckiest event that could befall this country, *for now all may be recovered.* The sword is drawn, and you must throw away the scabbard. Pass this Act, and you will have passed the rubicon; the Americans will then know that we shall temporize no longer. If it passes with tolerable unanimity, *Boston will submit, and all will end in a victory without carnage.*"—(*Bancroft's History of the American Revolution.*)

In a debate, in the House of Lords, on the German treaties for the hire of troops to act against the Americans, Lord Carlisle said (*Parl. Hist. vol. xviii. p. 1199*), "If, viewing the map, we see the figure Great Britain cuts in respect of territory, if we collect the whole into one focus, and connect the ideas of their strength *and our own native imbecility*, should America be torn from us, the prospect is, indeed, dreadful. It is, therefore, in my opinion, a measure not only necessary to the vindication of our honour, but essential to our very existence as a people. It calls upon us to strain every nerve to bring America back to her duty, and to secure to us her subordinate dependence." The earl of Sandwich, in a debate on the Address, in October, 1776, spoke in the same strain:—"As a friend of my country," he said, "I must dissent from the extraordinary proposition made by the noble duke (Richmond) who spoke last, recommending a reconciliation with America upon any terms, even upon grounds of admitting their independence. As an Englishman and a friend to my country, I cannot endure the thought; I will never consent to a doctrine so derogatory to the character, and so destructive to the interests of this country. I would risk everything rather than accede to it; I would hazard every drop of my blood, and the last shilling of the national treasure, sooner than Britain should be set at defiance, bullied and dictated to, by her ungrateful and undutiful children."—(*Parl. Hist. vol. xviii. p. 1382.*)

the speeches that were made at that time, and you will find there, stereotyped, as though for future use, the selfsame sentiments and opinions which are now commonly expressed with reference to our Indian troubles. We were to dispatch some half-dozen additional regiments to America, and to make a few examples of wholesome severity, and then all would be right again. We reckoned, however, without our host; for though our well-trained and high-mettled troops rarely met in the field the raw levies and undisciplined militia of America without asserting their superiority, still, in one way or other, the colonists stubbornly kept their ground, until France, Spain, and Holland, mindful of old grudges

Time is the true touchstone of political wisdom; and the following speech, delivered by the earl of Coventry, in the debate on the treaties for the hire of German troops, stands that test well:—"If you look," said he, "on the map of the globe, and compare the extent of Great Britain and North America; if you consider the soil, the harbours, rivers, climate, and increasing population, nothing but the most obstinate blindness and party spirit can prevail on any man to entertain a serious opinion that such a country will long continue under subjection to this. The question, therefore, is not how we shall be able to realize such a delusive scheme of dominion, but how we shall make it their interest to become faithful allies and warm friends. Surely, that can never be effected by fleets and armies. On the contrary, instead of meditating conquest, and exhausting our strength in an ineffectual struggle, we should vote a thanksgiving, and, wisely abandoning all wild schemes of coercing that country, *we should leave America to itself*, and wish to avail ourselves of the only substantial benefits we can ever derive from it,—the profits of an extensive commerce, and the strong support of a firm and friendly alliance for mutual defence and assistance."—(*Parl. Hist. vol. xviii. p. 1200.*)

towards us, and tempted by such an opportunity of gratifying them, stepped in, and threw their weight into the scale against us. The issue was, that, after some years of hard fighting, both by land and sea, we got tired of, rather than exhausted by the war, and yielded all that was demanded of us. The tie between the mother country and her high-spirited child was severed for ever; our alienated colonies became the United States of America; and the man to whose prudent counsels, and able command in the field, this great issue was mainly owing, was elected the first president of the great American republic. And, strange to say, there is now no name that Englishmen hold in greater honour than that of the "rebel" Washington.

And now, my Lord, I ask whether the loyalty of our late ally, the Emperor of the French, or the forbearance of our late enemy, the Emperor of Russia, be so unquestionable, that one or both of them might not be tempted to find occupation, more than enough, for our arms in Europe, whilst the flower of our troops are massacring and being massacred in India? Louis Napoleon's mission is only half accomplished, the star of his destiny does not yet shine in its full lustre, for he still has Waterloo to avenge. Besides, our free constitutions, so noble a contrast to his own despotism, irritates and alarms him; and he hates us for affording a refuge to men whose supposed machinations against him are incessantly haunting him in the midst of all the splendour which has answered to the call of his guilty ambition. As to Alexander,

he assuredly has not forgotten that, if France brought the greater power into the field against him during the late war, we were, from the beginning to the end of it, his most pertinacious enemy, and have ever since stood annoyingly in his way. I affirm, then, my Lord, that our Indian dominion must needs be a burthen and not a means of power to us, if, owing to the chronic discontent of the Indian people, it can only be maintained by the constant presence of a great standing army of Englishmen, and if, whenever we may have to measure our strength with a powerful antagonist in Europe, we must put down our subject myriads of Hindoos and Mussulmans in the number of our enemies. Nor let it be supposed that the discontent which our rule of a hundred years has not been able to remove, will be exorcised by the bloodthirsty spirit in which the present war is being waged. No, my Lord, the natural hatred of the Indian people towards us is not to be softened by hanging and shooting them with almost as little thought or mercy as though they were the wild beasts of their native jungles. Men may be coerced into submission, but not into loyalty. I must believe, then, my Lord, so long as human nature remains what it is, that by our "energetic" measures (such, I believe, is the phrase of the moment) in dealing with the revolt, we are sowing, broadcast, among the Indians the seeds of increased and undying hatred to our race and our rule. The time, I am afraid, will never come when we shall see the people of India fully reconciled to

our supremacy, and no longer disposed to hail with delight any chance which promises them vengeance and independence.

But, even if we could depend upon it that the people of India would always be as docile and well satisfied, as there is at present too much reason to think they will be refractory and malcontent, I have yet to learn in what way our dominion over them could give us a more commanding position amongst the nations of Europe. Give me, my Lord, some good reason why that dominion should enable us to present a better or bolder front to the great rivals and possible enemies that encompass us in this our immediate sphere. Tell me why, when we are at difference with France, with Russia, or with Austria, and when congresses, and conferences, and notes, and protocols, and minutes are the order of the day, our possession even of a submissive and loyal India should give weight to our remonstrances, and additional terror to our threats? Tell me, in short, why we should be any safer at home, or any more powerful amongst our neighbours, on account of our holding in subjection two hundred millions of human beings, who, whether well or ill affected to us, must always be too poor to pay us tribute, and are too far off to send us men? As to paying us tribute, it is, as has already appeared, a thing not to be thought of; and as to sending us men, let me remind you, my Lord, that during the late war with Russia, though we were sorely straitened for soldiers, and in our extremity even resorted to the not very honourable expedient of organizing an army of *condottieri*, under the name of "The

Foreign Legion," to fight for us, no one dreamed of our drawing reinforcements, for our thinned ranks in the Crimea, from our huge and, at that time, unemployed Indian army. And why? Not, assuredly, because there was then even a whispered doubt as to the loyalty of that army, or that the East-India Company could have hesitated to grant us any aid in its power, but that the cost of conveying soldiers, with their *matériel* of war, from so distant a part of the world, would very far exceed that of raising an army by *crimping* in Germany, Switzerland, and the United States. Besides, whatever might have been formerly thought about it, we have lately had abundant proof that an Indian army, even when well disciplined and armed, and fighting not merely for pay, makes but a poor figure when opposed to the hardier and braver soldiers of the North.

No, my Lord; the power of England, happily for herself, lies all *at home*: it lies here, under our very eyes, in our accumulated resources of a thousand years; in our fields, so well drained, irrigated, and husbanded; in our busy hives of industry, where the constant friction of mind with mind sharpens emulation and stimulates improvement; in our magnificent turnpike roads, our thousands of miles of railway, our canals, our electrical telegraphs, our innumerable and multiform machines; in our vast mercantile marine, as ubiquitous as the sea; in our great naval arsenals, where lie those ships of war which can sail round the world and nowhere find an enemy to dispute with them the dominion of the sea; in our gallant soldiers, in whose veins runs the

blood of the heroes of Agincourt and Cressy, of Blenheim and Ramillies, of Vittoria, Salamanca, and Waterloo, and who, under our own eyes, have lately proved at Alma and Inkerman, and, more lately still, before Delhi and Lucknow, that they are worthy of such sires ; in the tutelary sea which embraces us all round, and thus enables us to sleep in peace, even were a banded world in arms against us ; and, above all, in that freedom which so nobly distinguishes us from all the other great nations of Europe, and without which public spirit, and the generous and manly qualities affiliated to public spirit, can no more live than can a flame in an exhausted receiver.

These, my Lord, constitute the power of England, and the loss of these, or of any one of these, would do more to impair that power than would the loss of a hundred Indias. England was a great country centuries ago, when she knew India only as a kind of cloud-land from the fables of Mandeville. England was a great country in the times of Cromwell, of William the Third, and of Marlborough, when all we possessed in India were a few factories, and all we craved from India was permission to trade with her. England was a great country in the time of the elder Pitt, when we had as yet acquired only a small portion of that vast territory which now acknowledges, or but lately did acknowledge, our sovereignty. In fact, my Lord, we are not powerful because we possess the East Indies, but we possess the East Indies because we are powerful. Strip us of every colony we have,—let India go,—let Canada go,—let Australia go,—let

us simply be the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and we should still be a compact and homogeneous population of twenty-eight millions, who are neither fools, cowards, nor slaves. Is not this enough? What more can be necessary to make us a great and powerful nation? Our most formidable neighbour is, and ever must be, France; but we know that our native resources and population have, during the last century and a half, increased in a far greater proportion than those of France: consequently, if we proved the equal, and more than the equal of France in the time of their *Grand Monarque*, when we had no possessions in India, and when our other colonies, from their thin population and narrow limits, were but as dust in the balance of nations, why should we suppose that India is essential to our power now? Thank God, the unscrupulous Clive was not the founder of the greatness of England!

It being thus evident, my Lord, that our Eastern possessions neither enrich nor strengthen us, and that there is too much reason to fear that they may both impoverish and weaken us,—impoverish us by drawing deeply upon our revenue, and weaken us by diverting our strength from European to Asiatic objects,—I shall now proceed to consider the still more important question of our RIGHT to exercise sovereign and absolute sway over the two hundred millions of Indians whom we are now shooting and hanging as rebels and traitors, because they dare aspire to be independent. And what is that right? I know but of one answer that can be

given ; it is, the right of conquest, the right of the stronger ; it is the right of the midnight robber, who "stalks" through your house, and is for the moment its master. True, we have done our best to disguise this odious foundation of our power by ingenious sophisms, which have sufficed to lull the national conscience into the belief that the vast territory of India is not ours simply as the spoil of our sword. But history stands there, my Lord, with her plain tale, to contradict and confound any such pleasant assumptions. The simple truth is, it was by *filibustering* (that is the word) that we gained our first foothold in the East Indies, and it has been partly by the sword, and partly by dark intrigue, that we have since advanced, step by step, to our present dominion. We began with the battle of Plassy, a battle which was won more by bribery than by prowess ; Clive having, by a previous treaty, engaged Meer Jaffier, the general who commanded for the Nabob of Bengal, to betray his master in the very crisis of the engagement. As the reward of this service, we raised the traitor to the Nabob's vacant throne, but, of course, with the understanding that he should be our puppet, that he should make war or peace just as we chose, and especially, and above all things, that he should extort money from his subjects to satisfy our incessant cravings. He was not quite so docile as we expected, so we soon deposed him, and put in his place another puppet, whom we thought we could more depend upon ; nor was it long before we laid aside all disguise, and boldly assumed the sovereignty, in name as well as in reality, to our-

selves. Such was our *début* as an Indian power. All our other acts in the conquest of India have been very much of a piece with this. Now we made war upon a prince because he had money, and we wanted it,—now because he was powerful enough to be dangerous,—and now because he was too weak to resist us: now we aided a sovereign against his rebellious subjects, and now we aided rebellious subjects against their sovereign; now we deprived a sovereign of his independence by granting him our protection as a friend, and now by making war upon him as an enemy: now, by our vexatious tyranny, we drove a state to break some treaty with us, and then we conquered the offending state for having broken its treaty: now we conquered a province because we wanted it, and now we conquered another province to make our former conquest more secure. And so, my Lord, we have gone on, intriguing, fighting, conquering, and *annexing*, until we have become the absolute masters of Hindostan, and of two hundred millions of human beings, altogether alien to us in manners, sentiments, religion, language, race, and colour.

But, though the conquerors of Hindostan, we are, and always must remain, a mere handful amidst the myriads of natives. In fact, the entire European population in India, including the army, is at the present time, estimated at only 70,000; a number large enough, perhaps, to irritate and oppress the natives, but too small to exercise any assimilating power upon them. No amalgamation of the conquerors and the conquered, such as has frequently

happened in other enslaved countries, is, consequently, possible in this case. Centuries hence, should we so long retain our Eastern possessions, we shall still be foreigners in India, and our dominion will still be that of the sword. To the Indians, our very complexions must for ever bear testimony against us as conquerors. Some persons, I am aware, dream of a large European colonization of India; of intermarriages with the natives, of a gradual fusion of the two races. But it is hardly necessary to say, that without the greatest cruelty and injustice to the natives, any such colonization is impossible, since that region, though a continent in itself, has, from time immemorial, been peopled up to its full capabilities. India, my Lord, has no elbow-room for strangers: in this respect, differing essentially from those colonies which are, as it were, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, and which may, perhaps, be destined, in some remote age of the world, to replace, with kindred institutions, and kindred language, our then effete and almost forgotten England. Moreover, so fatal is the torrid climate of India to European constitutions that, we are told, every British soldier serving there, is, even in times of peace, three times a year in hospital; and a regiment numbering 718 men on disembarkation has been known in the course of eight years to be reduced to 109. Hence, no Englishman on going to India ever intends to take root there; on the contrary, he looks forward with eagerness to the time when, his pension earned and his fortune made, he will be able to recross the seas to his native

country, and thanks his stars if death spares him to do so, though with a ruined liver and a shattered constitution. In short, our tenure of India, from the very nature of things, has been, is, and always must be, that of a conqueror. The time will never come when we shall form an integral part of the country, or be anything else than an army encamped in it. Arrogant, rapacious, and cruel as we were at the beginning of our rule, so must we be to the end of it.

I know of no political event in modern times that has more moved the indignation of the world, and of this country in particular, than the subjugation of Poland by Russia. In that indignation I fully participate. During the ill-fated insurrection of the Poles in 1830, I well remember with what breathless interest I watched all the incidents of that chequered and heroic struggle—how fervently I rejoiced in every marvellous victory won by the patriot army, how I hoped against hope that the high justice of its cause would charm victory to its standard,—and how sad at heart I was, when, on the fatal field of Warsaw, might prevailed over right, and Poland fell once more under the dominion of Russia,—her vigorous national life extinct,—her future for ever divorced from her past. But odious, unjust, and cruel though the dominion of Russia over Poland may be, it is, I deliberately affirm, far less odious, unjust, and cruel than the dominion of this country over India. Observe the difference, my Lord. In the former case both the conquerors and the conquered are Europeans ; both are Chris-

tians—both are white men ; whereas in the latter case the conquerors are Europeans, Christians, and white men, whilst the conquered are Asiatics, heathens, and dark men. We may be sure, then, that, acting upon one another by their natural affinities, Poland and Russia will in time become as one true and united nation ; Poland forgetting her former independence—Russia, that Poland was once the prize of her sword. This has, indeed, already taken place to some extent ; and, perhaps, at no very distant period, the descendants of Kosciusko and Czartorisky may be seen doing homage to the Czar, as their liege lord and sovereign, with as much sincerity and warmth as the descendants of Suwarrow and Menzikoff. But, as I have already urged, a close and natural union between this country and India is forbidden by nature herself, in the immense ocean which she has interposed between the conquerors and the conquered, in the white skins which she has given to the one, and in the dark skins which she has given to the other, and in the fierce sun which reigns over the plains of Hindostan, and interdicts their colonization by Europeans, under mortal penalties. A short while ago, by an ordered and formal act of national humiliation, we, as a people, deprecated the anger of God for our manifold sins. We did this in the hope that the Almighty, thus entreated and propitiated, would bless our arms, and give us the victory over the rebellious sepoys. But we should, in my opinion, have done much better, and have offered a far more acceptable service to a just God, had we on

that solemn occasion acknowledged with contrite hearts, as the first and foremost of our national sins, the rapacity and lust of dominion which for a century past have been impelling us to subjugate, one after another, the different races of the remote Hindostan.

Our forefathers, more humane and more just than ourselves, received with consternation the tidings of the lust of lucre, and lust of aggrandisement, which distinguished our early career in the Indies. Instead of hailing Clive as a hero, they confronted him, in spite of his success, with a stern inquiry into his conduct; and such was the load of obloquy he lay under, that, we are told by the most brilliant writer of the present day,* the very house in which he dwelt was regarded by his neighbours with a mysterious horror. But, though hard and unscrupulous, Clive was almost a good man in comparison with his successor, Warren Hastings, who seems really never to have had a thought that he ought to shape his conduct otherwise than according to the expediency of the moment. His rapacity had no other measure than his wants, and he hesitated at no cruelty which might be necessary to get rid of an enemy, or to enforce his teeming schemes of extortion. Honour to the Commons of England for impeaching him! And never did British eloquence manifest itself in a nobler shape, or in a juster cause, than when, one after another, Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Erskine, Dunning, "fulminated" against the arch-

* Lord Macaulay.

oppressor of India,—against the bold bad man who had committed the judicial murder of Nancomar; who had, of set purpose, driven the rajah of Benares to desperation by his often-repeated “stand and deliver,” and who had taken advantage of that chief’s resistance to depose him, to annex Benares to the British territory, and to charge it with a ten-fold tribute; who, with calculated cruelty, pushed even to actual torture, had compelled the harmless and recluse princesses of Oude to disclose and deliver up to him large masses of treasure, their own private hoards, to which he had no other right than the robber’s, namely, that he wanted them; and who, *for a price*, had lent a British army to Sujah Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude, wherewith to subjugate the Rohillas, a brave and independent race, who might have successfully maintained their own against their native enemy, but who fell beneath the irresistible valour of their British opponents. But all these things are forgotten now, or are no longer regarded as they were by the unsophisticated moral sense of an elder time. We have learned to be proud of the acquisition of India, as “a middle class achievement;” and our newspapers, echoing, or perhaps inspiring, the public sentiment, are not ashamed to breathe a prayer for the resurrection of “our Clives and our Hastings.”*

It is a very general assumption in this country, that, though we rule India by right of conquest, we

* In a leading article in the *Sun*, we find these two worthies rather oddly multiplied into three: “Our Clives, our Warrens, and our Hastings.”

have amply atoned for any vice in the origin of our power, by the blessings which our paternal sway has conferred upon the natives. This assumption is just now the cuckoo cry of all who write or speak on the unhappy recent events in India. The *Times* begins the cry; Lord Shaftesbury takes it up; Sir James Graham repeats it; Lord Brougham peals it forth with emphasis; Mr. Gladstone joins in, with a difference. "What grievances have they to complain of?" asks one. "A foul and causeless treason!" exclaims another. "It is only a military revolt," breaks forth a third; "the great mass of the Indian people know when they are well off, and do not desire to be released from our dominion." "If not for our own sake, for the sake of the people of India themselves, we must put down this monstrous revolt," adds a fourth. Moreover, we are told that the Hindoos, unlike any other people, are not in the smallest degree sensible to the ignominy of being under a foreign yoke. "As it is," says the *Times*,* "the Hindoos willingly and cheerfully accept government at the hand of others, and ask only to be governed well." A doctrine, which, by thus representing us as the benefactors as well as the conquerors of India, so happily reconciles our conscience with our ambition, could hardly fail to meet from us with a very cordial reception, a general currency, and a liberal immunity from criticism. No wonder, then, that almost every Englishman proclaims it as indubitable that, under our auspicious rule, India is

* October 31, 1857.

thriving and content. The only conclusion, however, that I can draw from all this is, that England recoils from the naked view of her own inordinate ambition, and, therefore strives to give to it some agreeable relief of justice and humanity. So is it with all conquerors. Russia, for instance, can speak just as high for her dominion over Poland, as we for our dominion over India. If we say that our dominion over India has been mild, paternal, and beneficent, Russia will say, quite as positively, that her dominion over Poland has likewise been mild, paternal, and beneficent. If we say that our rule has afforded to India a happy order and repose, which that country never enjoyed under its native princes, Russia will say, that the turbulence and intestine dissensions to which Poland was a prey, during its days of independence, have long since vanished, and that an unbroken quiet now reigns there. If we insist upon the long and general submission of the people of India to our rule, as a proof that they are happy and contented under it, Russia will again follow suit, by insisting upon the long and general submission of the Poles to her rule, as a proof that they too are contented, and no longer have a wish for their former independence. If we remind Russia that the Poles, but little more than a quarter of a century ago, *did* manifest their hatred of her yoke by a last desperate and heroic attempt to shake it off, Russia will retort upon us that India, at the present moment, is in revolt to emancipate herself from our yoke. In fact, my Lord, nations, like individuals, are rarely without

some excuses for their misdeeds,—excuses which only barely impose upon themselves, and which are scornfully rejected by the rest of the world, but which, at all events, serve the purpose of rescuing the offenders from the humiliation of being absolutely without defence. These excuses, moreover, are commonly mere assumptions, which, however false or improbable, do not, from their very vagueness and generality, admit of being disproved, and have thus no difficulty in passing current amongst men who are prepared even to strain a point in order to believe in them. In short, British rule in India is, on the first view of it, a perfect political monstrosity, nor can the utmost desire to find excuses for it hit upon anything more satisfactory than certain commonplaces, which are at the service of every conqueror, and which, by assuming everything, prove nothing. No one, I think, will affirm that we have the same, or anything like the same, assurance of the actual beneficence of our Indian rule, as we have that that rule, *the rule of conquest*, is evil in its principle, that is, in its tendency.

Having thus pointed out how little credit is due to the popular estimate of our Indian rule, I shall now proceed to show, not in vague and general terms, but articulately and distinctly, that India has, in fact, had to suffer at our hands all that conquered states generally have to suffer at the hands of their conquerors: And I call upon you, my Lord, as you read the catalogue of the sufferings and humiliations of our great dependency, to ask yourself, ever and anon, this question, What Eng-

land would have said,—how England would have felt, —what England would have done,—had she been the oppressed instead of being the oppressor? For my own part—I say it boldly—had I been a Hindoo I should not have been in arms *for* her Majesty; on the contrary, I should have felt towards her Majesty (and who will deny my right and my duty so to feel) much as the Saxon thanes and churls felt towards *our* conquerors, the early Norman monarchs; and just as they, for ages, cast a sad look behind to the good times of King Edward the Confessor, so should I have cast the same sad look behind to the good times of Baber and Aurungzebe; times which, though we constantly speak as if the Indians, until we took them in hand, were amongst the most wretched of mankind, are described by their own historians, and are still remembered in the mournful traditions of their country, as an age of gold. And now, my Lord, for the particulars of these same wrongs,—all of them, perhaps, the natural and inevitable result of that one master-wrong, that “we stalk through the land as conquerors:”—

In the first place, partly to satisfy the cravings of an exchequer which war has been incessantly draining, partly in the natural recklessness of conquerors, and partly in an unavoidable ignorance of the habits, circumstances, and capabilities of the people under its care, the Indian Government has imposed upon the entire lands of India a grievous and intolerable *tax*. This tax professedly amounts in Bengal to one-third of the gross produce of the land, and is there

paid by the zemindars, or land-owners; but it varies somewhat capriciously in the different provinces, and, in many of them, is paid by the ryots, or cultivators. It was first established, in the Bengal territory, by Lord Cornwallis, whose mode of proceeding in the matter was in the most approved style of conquerors; the government taking possession of all the lands of Bengal as its own, and then distributing them anew amongst different persons, each of whom was thenceforward to be responsible for the tax charged upon his particular allotment. In making this distribution, some regard, no doubt, was paid to pre-existing rights; but there was neither time nor means to do this otherwise than very partially, and the consequence was, that the measure in question, whilst laying upon the people a grinding tax, carried with it all the injustice of a wholesale confiscation. This is not all; not only is this tax exorbitant in amount,—not only was it imposed in the rude and summary manner I have just described, but it is really (whatever be the name given to it) a *tribute* paid to a foreign government; at any rate, it is all paid into a foreign treasury, it is arbitrarily administered by a foreign body, at the distance of many thousands of miles, and it is very generally applied to purposes in which India can take no interest, and often to purposes to which India is averse. Indeed, a large portion of the Indian revenue is spent in keeping on foot an immense army of natives; and thus the taxes, remorselessly wrung from Indians, have been employed, by means of an Indian army, in extend-

ing, more and more, our dominions in a country which, of right (if such a thing as right there be), belongs to the Indians.

Even if the Indian Government had, by liberal advances of money, promoted the execution of useful publicworks within its territories, I cannot admit, with Lord Brougham and many others, that this would give it a claim to the "gratitude" of the Indian people, any more than I can admit that it would give you, my Lord, and your colleagues, a claim to the gratitude of the people of England, that you had applied the taxes raised from *them* for *their* benefit. The Indian Government, however, has not even this poor claim to the gratitude of its subjects, since it has, in fact, been all along remarkably chary in advancing money from its treasury for the permanent improvement of the country. It is admitted on all hands that nothing would so tend to develop the great latent resources of our Eastern possessions as easier communications, by means of good roads, between its different parts; and yet, shame to us, we had been the masters of India and of its public treasure for sixty long years, before we opened a single new road! Even the Great Trunk Road, to which we so often refer as one of the happy results of our rule in India, is still not half completed, nor would it, perhaps, have been undertaken at all, had it not been for the sake of the military advantages which it promised to afford, and which it has, during the present troubles, so well afforded. So little interest, indeed, did the Indian Government, at first, take in the welfare of the myriads who had suddenly passed

under its rule, that, we are told, it even permitted those numerous irrigating canals, with which the provident care of former monarchs had enriched the country, to fall into decay, and thus condemned to famine great multitudes, who had hitherto drawn their subsistence from the lands fertilized by those works. By a curious coincidence, shortly before the breaking out of the mutiny, there appeared in "*La Revue des Deux Mondes*," a series of papers on British India. The author had evidently mastered his subject, and spoke with the accurate knowledge acquired by personal observation. He evinces throughout his work a very friendly feeling towards this country, and is willing to believe that our rule must, in time, exercise a civilizing influence over India. But his indulgence does not permit him to ignore the fact that hitherto we have done little or nothing to improve our Eastern dominions. Listen, my Lord, to the statement of this intelligent and friendly foreigner: "*Jusqu'à ces dernières années, si quelque évènement imprévu et terrible avait mis fin à la domination Anglaise dans l'Inde, elle eût laissé derrière elle bien peu d'empreintes sur le sol, et le voyageur des siècles futurs, qui eût rencontré à chaque pas les splendides ruines qui témoignent longtemps encore de la puissance des empereurs Mongols, eût à peine trouvé dans quelque forte démantelée un fusil à piston, ou un canon Paixahams, souvenir de ces Européens auxquels le Dieu des batailles avait octroyé l'empire de l'Inde.*"* My

* Tome xvii., 15 Jan., 1857; deuxième livraison.

case, my Lord, would not be complete if I did not add that the taxes, thus exorbitant in amount, and thus misspent, have been extorted from the poor natives by those revolting practices to which I have before alluded. I do not deny it, my Lord,—all this extortion, reckless expenditure, and cruelty is natural enough; for are we not the conquerors of India? And what has a right of conquest to do with humanity and justice?

Secondly.—We have closed all the avenues to power and social distinction against the natives. In an army of 400,000 natives, there was not, when the mutiny broke out, a single commissioned officer that was not a European. The native might be a corporal or a sergeant, or an underling of some such kind,* but, no matter what his capacity, or what his length of service, he must not aspire to be a cadet. What is more, even the lower ranks of the army, which have hitherto afforded some field for the enterprise and activity of the needy youth of India, will henceforth, it is expected, be closed against them. As to the civil service, all offices that give distinction, power, or liberal emolument, are given to Englishmen; the poor natives only coming in for those mean and shabbily-paid ones which the conquerors, in their arrogance, disdain to accept, or are not numerous enough to fill. Perhaps I may be told that to bestow power upon the natives would be to endanger our own empire—and so, no doubt,

* The titles of the non-commissioned officers in the Indian service are not the same as in the line, but, with this difference, the above statement is substantially correct.

it would. But still, whatever the cause, I may surely ask those who, like Lord Brougham and Lord Shaftesbury, cannot, for the lives of them, conceive what grievances subject India has to complain of, whether it be *not* a grievance for the natives—two hundred millions of them, remember, my Lord!—to find themselves thus the mere hewers of wood, and drawers of water, in their own country? Here is a haughty Mussulman, whose forefather followed the standard of the Prophet over half of the world,—here is a Brahmin, proud of his superior caste and of his ancient blood,—and we are surprised and angry that these men should be impatient of a state of things which makes their dark faces, and everything they most honour themselves for, a ground of social disqualification, and almost of outlawry, in order, forsooth, that we, their conquerors, may lord it over them with more security. If I thought that the people of India could be satisfied with their abject state under our rule, I should despise them for their poor spirit. I certainly cannot charge them with “base ingratitude,” or with “foul treason,” for showing us that they are *not* satisfied.

Thirdly.—We wound the native Indians in the most sensitive part of man’s moral nature by constantly insulting their religion. It is true that that religion is absurd; it is true that the gods they worship are monstrous, horrible, grotesque,—that the rites they practise are ridiculous, and sometimes shameful. But, remember, those gods and rites have been their gods and rites, and the gods and rites of their fathers, not merely for hundreds, but for thousands

of years. It may be difficult to understand, but so, nevertheless, it is,—that the worshippers of Vishnu and Brahma are as firmly attached to their religion as we are to ours—perhaps even more so, since their very ignorance, their simplicity, the entire absence of any critical doubt or inquiry amongst them, leaves their minds undisturbed by those misgivings which have more or less invaded the religious convictions of countries where every opinion is submitted to question, and every objection to it is freely stated and insisted on. Hence, the supercilious pity with which our countrymen in India deplore, and the zeal with which they denounce, the religious convictions and rites of the natives, are deeply resented by the latter, as part of that appanage of woe and degradation which the subjugation of their country has fixed upon them. Nor is this all. They likewise fear—and, God knows, they have cause to fear—that sooner or later we shall become tired of the mild means of propagandism we have hitherto adopted, and, Mahomet-like, shall avail ourselves of our full rights as conquerors to impose our own creed upon them. Fancy, my Lord, what would be *our* feelings if we held—I will not say our Christianity, but simply our Protestantism, by the frail tenure of the goodwill and pleasure of a conqueror who abhorred Luther as an arch-heretic—who thought that a belief in the real presence was essential to salvation, and who was constantly muttering threats that it was his “mission” to uphold the true religion, and to smite schismatics everywhere? There is my Lord Shaftesbury, who cannot conceive what

grievances the Indians have to complain of. How, I should like to know, would he feel in such a case? How would he act? Would he then say that it was no grievance for a nation to hold its religion at the will of a conqueror? Would he then denounce it as a "foul treason" were Protestant England to rise up and shake off so odious a yoke? He would not; or, if he would, it would simply show (what would certainly not very much surprise any one) that his lordship's much-paraded piety is, after all, only the *dilettantism* of an idle nobleman. Well, then, as a just man, I am bound to say that it is a grievance—an intolerable grievance—to the two hundred millions of native Indians who lie at our mercy, that one of these days, by a short Act of Parliament, or, perhaps, by a simple Order in Council, they may find themselves condemned to forsake their ancient temples, their familiar rites, their venerated gods, in order to make a lip-deep profession of a religion which is not theirs, and which must be odious in their eyes, because it presents itself to them as a badge of their subjection.

Fourthly.—In our more familiar intercourse with the natives of India, we never forget that we are the conquerors, and they the conquered. To have a white face is, throughout the vast extent of our Indian empire, to have a kind of patent of nobility, a patent which entitles its bearer to treat the natives with ineffable disdain as an inferior race. Of this we have ample proof in the letters from India which daily appear in our newspapers: "niggers," "pandies," "brutes," "scoundrels," being profusely

scattered through them, as the accepted designations of the Indians amongst their conquerors. It is this very arrogance, indeed, which prevents us, at the present moment, from believing it possible that the natives can even dare to wish for their former independence, or be otherwise than satisfied with the crumbs which we deign to fling to them from their own table. In short, the whole of India we regard as our property, an appendage to England, and its teeming population as our helots.

Thus, my Lord, as we hold our Eastern dominions only by the right of conquest, so we exercise that right as conquerors usually do. Let there, then, be no self-delusion amongst us upon this point: we are, in the plain vulgar sense, the conquerors of India. But can we be satisfied with this character? With so much before me to make me think otherwise I will not say *we cannot*, but I will say it boldly, *we ought not*. If it be right in us to conquer and rule over an alien country, it must be equally right in any other nation to do the same. Were Austria, then, taking advantage of our present weakness, to pick a quarrel with Sardinia, to conquer her, and then to remodel her institutions so as to make them in harmony with the despotic spirit which now hangs like a funeral pall over the continent, what, I should like to know, would be our feeling about it? It would, I am sure, be one of strong indignation. In vain would Austria tell us, that, thanks to her great military power, she had subdued her neighbour and was ruling over her by right of conquest; for we should immediately reply

that might was not right, and that the conquest of Sardinia by Austria was a great wrong. But what if Austria should retort upon us our conquest of India ; what if she should ask us how we reconciled that fact with the principle which we insisted upon applying to *her* conduct ; how should we then be able to defend ourselves ? Able though you are, my Lord, as a diplomatist, you would I am sure be struck dumb by a recrimination whose remorseless logic would, at one and the same time, convict us of a great wrong, and a great hypocrisy. In fact, our conquests in the East have been without the excuses with which ambition generally contrives to gild its delinquencies : for, sundered as we are by so prodigious a distance from India, we had no old grudges to avenge upon her, no mischief, no danger to apprehend from her ; she belonged to one sphere, we to another. Our first relations with her were simply commercial ; we crossed the seas to trade with her ; we were kindly and hospitably received by her ; we were permitted to build factories upon her coasts : but, alas for her ! we found her weak, unwarlike, and disorganized—and therefore we conquered her. We conquered her just as the Spaniards conquered Mexico and Peru, with the same cupidity and eagerness for aggrandisement, with the same treachery, and almost with the same inhumanity. We conquered her just as Russia would recently, if we had not stepped in and forbidden the deed, have conquered Turkey ; a country which in many respects resembles India, and which her ambitious and powerful neighbour would not, assuredly,

in the event of success, have forborne to annex, for want of plausible reasons after our Indian pattern. And it is very strange, my Lord, that whilst we were making war against Russia to prevent this act of injustice, it never occurred to us that every denunciation which we were then directing against our enemy's overweening ambition was equally applicable to our own one hundred years' career of conquest and annexation in India.

I am well aware, my Lord, that all I have yet said is only matter preliminary to the more delicate, if not more difficult, task which still remains to be performed, namely, that of pointing out the course which it behoves us to pursue in the present crisis of our Indian empire. He, however, must be a dull man who does not see the conclusion to which I am irresistibly carried by the course of my previous argument. I have contended that our Indian empire gives us neither wealth nor power, nay, more than this, that there are strong grounds for fearing that, if persevered in, it may eventually both impoverish and enfeeble us. I have contended that that empire is a creature of might, and not of right; that, in short, we are but conquerors in India, as Timour was before us, and not the just and lawful owners of the country. I have contended that our rule in India is, in a peculiar manner, unjust and unnatural, because even Time cannot, as in the case of most other foreign rules, soften it, but it must to the last wear the stern features of conquest. Lastly, I have contended that our treatment of the native Indians has had

no particular merit of beneficence to distinguish it from the rule of other conquerors; assuredly we did not conquer India to make its people happy. Well, my Lord, such being my premises, what other conclusion can I come to than this,—that it behoves us, in the best way we can, and with the best grace we can, to leave India, as God and nature intended it, to the Indians; satisfying ourselves with our own noble domain of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and with those flourishing colonies which we ourselves have planted, and which (though the time will come for their emancipation too) will not readily forget their lineage or their allegiance. Justice commands this,—prudence commands this. In obeying prudence, we shall consult our interest—in obeying justice, we shall do our duty. If, indeed, justice alone commanded, it ought to be all-sufficient; but when both justice and prudence speak in the same voice—when they both point in the same direction—it would be, on our part, not only wickedness but folly, and not only folly but wickedness, to disobey. In truth, it is *always* the highest prudence to be just; it is then only that prudence becomes wisdom.

False shame is a weakness so nearly allied to all the better parts of our nature that it is always entitled to some forbearance; still, false shame is a weakness, and cannot, therefore, be allowed as a good and serious reason for any man's conduct, and still less so for that of a powerful nation, which prides itself on its magnanimity. Hence, if it be said that we cannot abandon our Indian rule, unjust

and worthless though it may be, because, were we to do so, we should draw down upon ourselves the imputation of being weak and cowardly—my answer is, that whatever the world may choose to say about it, if we ourselves know that our motives are just and good, we ought to be satisfied, and to trust to Time, the Enlightener, for doing us justice.

But, in point of fact, such an act would, even in the opinion of the world, redound to our highest honour, and would cover us with far greater glory than the winning of a hundred battles in a bad or a doubtful cause. For it would give us a moral supremacy amongst the nations,—a character for lofty disinterestedness, for inflexible constancy, for exalted principle, ay, and for firm good sense, such as no nation has ever yet enjoyed, or deserved. Understand me, my Lord : I do not mean that we should all at once pack up and make a sudden and precipitate *flit* from our Eastern dominions, as though we were doing a common every-day thing. No ; I would have an act of such momentous consequence, an act of justice so grand as a precedent to mankind, carefully discussed, solemnly determined, and accompanied by every arrangement and palliative requisite to break the violence of so great a change. For our own sake, moreover, I would have it heralded by a manifesto which should proclaim, as with the voice of a trumpet, to all the countries of the world and to all coming ages, how we, being well satisfied, from recent events, that our rule was odious to the lawful inhabitants of India, and that we could no longer maintain or

perpetuate that rule except by the sword, had, for conscience' sake, and out of our regard to the great principles of public justice and national rights, deliberately and freely come to the resolution to leave India henceforth altogether free from our control, and in the enjoyment of her full natural independence. I ask, who, in the presence of such a declaration, would dare to say that we had acted through fear or conscious weakness? Who, indeed, that had either a head to reason or a heart to feel, would not rather admire and applaud an act so exactly in accordance with all the principles which we have of late years deemed ourselves a nation chosen and set apart to vindicate and assert? Who would affirm that England, in thus forbearing to exercise the rights of a conqueror, and freely setting India at liberty, had done anything else than what, according to all her previous professions, she was bound to do? What if the despots of the world should sneer at a liberality and a sense of duty which they are so little capable of understanding or appreciating—the peoples, at all events, with a truer instinct of what is great and noble, would see in it a proof of exalted principle, of real greatness of soul, of a lofty and generous wisdom. Amidst the coming troubles of the earth,—amidst wars and rumours of wars,—amidst revolutions and reactions,—amidst overthrown thrones and overthrown constitutions,—there would still be “one bright particular star” towards which the nations would look with hope and with confidence—*England!* Yes, my Lord—believe it as you may,—our moral grandeur, in en-

franchising India on such grounds, would, all to nothing, give us a greater supremacy in the world than could be obtained from the re-establishment of our power by the most brilliant feats of arms, or by the most successful wiles of that diplomacy of which your Lordship is so famous a professor. On the contrary, if we obstinately persist in ruling as conquerors over a remote and utterly alien people, we shall deservedly sink in the estimation of all who love justice and consistency; we shall be flouted as mere mouthing pretenders to virtues of which, when we are fairly put to the test, we show ourselves to be utterly void; and the sympathy we have so ostentatiously expressed for all struggling and oppressed nationalities, the indignation we have fulminated against the conquerors and tyrants of those nationalities, will everywhere be put down as *shams*. Russia will then have quite as good, ay, and a better right to reproach England with her India, than England has to reproach Russia with her Poland. Let me add that, if we are to emancipate India, *now* is the time to do it—*now*, when no one can question our military prowess, and when we may boldly affirm, and as confidently believe, that, in order to re-establish our empire, we have but to put forth all our strength.

My Lord, I have hitherto assumed that if we go on and untiringly prosecute the war, India must (so runs the phrase) be reconquered.* But, permit

* This very phrase shows that we are under no mistake as to the *right* by which we hold India.

me to say, this agreeable side has its reverse, and a very forbidding one too. India is a long way off; its deadly climate fights on its side, and our enemies, if not very brave or skilful in war, have whatever strength mere numbers can give—circumstances which may make it, at all events, no easy matter for us to re-establish our supremacy. Now, I ask whether we are quite sure that England will choose to spend her men and her treasure without stop or stint in this cause? How long will she be content to send forth army after army, always destined to conquer in battle, but always destined to be conquered in turn by the mortal toils of an Indian war? Suppose the war to be still pending, one, two, three years hence; suppose—as must happen in that case—the entire expense of it to be cast upon the people of this country; suppose that we have met with some reverses that have damped our hopes, and abated our haughtiness; do you think, my Lord, that the people will not then begin to inquire what is the value of India to us—what we have to do with India, or what India has to do with us; whether, in short, it would not be better to leave the Indians to govern themselves, than for us to insist upon governing or misgoverning them at such a prodigious cost to ourselves? I ask again, then, my Lord, do you really believe that the people of England will for any length of time continue to regard the distant region of India as a stake of such vital consequence to them as to call for any sacrifice of men, money, principle, and reputation, in order to win it? To say the least,

my Lord, I hesitate much to answer this question in the affirmative. Nor is this all; for it still remains to be observed that the war may not always remain a *duel* between the two parties now engaged in it. The time may come, as I have before observed, when India will find amongst the great powers of Europe some arm more powerful than her own to protect and save her,—an event which even the most sanguine will hardly deny might render the re-establishment of our Indian empire an impossible thing. I ask, then, my Lord, whether it be not far better for us now, at the outset, and with all the grace and honour attendant on free-will bounty, to restore to India the independence to which she is justly entitled, than to persevere in the cruel war we are now prosecuting,—a war which, considering the utter worthlessness of its object, we may soon get heartily sick of, and which, upon the happening of a not improbable event, might end—as a similar war of ours once before did end*—in our discomfiture and humiliation.

I shall anticipate one objection, which I do not doubt will start into the minds of many persons, at the suggestion I have just made. It will be said that, however worthless our Eastern possessions may be to us, and however, under other circumstances, justice might require us to renounce a dominion which the sword and intrigue have alone won for us, and which the sword and intrigue can

* Of course I allude here to the issue of the war with our revolted American colonies.

alone preserve, still it behoves us to maintain our ground in India—at any rate for a time—if only to punish the atrocities perpetrated by the sepoys during the present troubles. Now, if cannon-balls and bayonet-thrusts were always directed with discriminating justice, there might be some force in this objection; but as, in the progress of a war—in the heat of battle—and especially in the sack of cities, death and destruction are no respecters of persons, but confound in one promiscuous execution the guilty and the innocent,—citizens with soldiers,—the old with the young,—those, whose only crime may be that they have fought in the cause of their country's independence, with those whose conduct may have deserved the most exemplary punishment—I can see neither the humanity nor the justice of continuing the war for such a purpose. Nor is it surely unworthy of consideration, that whilst our soldiers may be exacting in bloody battles, where no quarter is given, full payment of the debt of vengeance we deem to be owing to us, those terrible scourges—sun-strokes, dysentery, cholera—may be ravaging *their* ranks, and devouring them by whole armies. I cannot agree, then, my Lord that, if every other consideration is in favour of putting an end to the war and of giving to India her independence, we ought to persist in the war simply for the sake of a vengeance which, exacted as it must be, it would be absurd to call by the sacred name of justice.

I go still farther, my Lord. I affirm that we really have no right to be so clamorous in our

denunciations of the cruelties of the sepoys. I am aware that I am now touching on very delicate ground, and that, to propitiate the public ear, I ought to make my advances with some rhetorical management; but as it is my ambition to be the frank and fearless adviser, and, where need is, even the rebuker of my countrymen, and not their flatterer—I shall not hesitate to say that our hands are assuredly not so clean as to entitle us to sit in austere judgment upon the cruel acts of our enemy. If he has been savage and remorseless, so, I affirm, have we; if he has made light of human life and human suffering in his hatred of our domination, and in his convulsive struggles to shake it off; so have we equally made light of human life and human suffering in our fear of the loss of our domination, and in our stubborn efforts to maintain it. Proofs innumerable of this may be found in the thick-coming letters from India, which during the last six months have so much occupied the columns of our newspapers,—some expressing without disguise a savage craving for hecatombs of victims, and others relating terrible deeds of blood perpetrated on our side without one word of pity or regret, and frequently in a flippant tone, a jocular vein, which would be almost shocking were the sufferers wild beasts, and not men. One tells us, just as though it were the merest trifle in the world, or a common incident in every war, “we hang our prisoners every night.” Another writes as follows: “A small force of fifty of the 3rd Europeans, fifty militia infantry, twenty militia infantry, and two

guns, the whole under the command of Captain Ross, 3rd European regiment, with Girdlestone, Coperal, Click, Walker of the artillery, and several other officers attached, went against an insurgent village ten miles off, yesterday, and burnt it down; and the cavalry having captured a number of the inhabitants, Phillips, of the civil service, *the magistrate of Agra*, who was with the force, hanged two of the principal men *with his own hands*, and then, as the force was in a hurry to be off, he shot them through the heart with his revolver; *so that if they were cut down after his departure, it might not tend to their advantage.* In these days, no one is very particular about matters of this description. Two young officers lately shot a Mahomedan a piece only for scowling at them, and a court of inquiry justified them.* An officer, who was serving under General Havelock in his march on Cawnpore, speaks, without one word of condemnation, “of the evidences of the alacrity of our men in the numerous sepoys that were hanging to the trees by the road-side.” One writer tells us that, wherever the telegraph wires are cut, our troops burn the nearest village, and hang up the principal inhabitants. A private soldier in one of the Highland regiments, after giving a clever and animated description of a

* We may be sure that, in expeditions of this kind (and they appear to have been lamentably numerous), the idlest rumours would be accepted as conclusive proofs of guilt by the rough and ready justice of a soldiery who are generally “in a hurry to be off,” and, in their blind fury, see an enemy in every swarthy face.

military foray from Benares into the adjoining country,—a foray which, from the number of villages burnt, and natives summarily hanged, must have turned every surviving inhabitant of the district into a mortal enemy of the British rule, concludes thus: “ Out of the prisoners that were taken, the man that the 2,000 rupees were offered for was taken for nothing. We hanged ten of them on the spot, and flogged a good many—about sixty. We burned another village that night. Oh, if you had seen the ten march round the grave, and seen them looking the same as if nothing was going to happen to them! There was one of them fell; the rope broke, and down he came,—he was hung up again. After they were hanged, the others were all taken round to see them. On the 6th, we, a number of 180, went out against 2,000. We came close up to them; they were all drawn up in three lines, but on we dashed, and in a short time they began to run. We set fire to a large village that was full of them; we surrounded it, and, *as they came running out of the village, shot them.* We took eighteen of them prisoners; they were all tied together, and we fired a volley at them, and shot them on the spot. We came home that night, after marching twenty miles and fighting nearly thirty to one. In this country, we are told, we had killed 500 of them; our loss was one man and one horse killed, and one man wounded.” * In another letter, written from Delhi, we find the following passage:—“ All

* Let the writer think what he may of it, it was no very brilliant exploit for 180 well-trained and well-armed soldiers to

the city people found within the walls were bayoneted on the spot; and the numbers were considerable, as you may suppose when I tell you that in some houses forty or fifty people were hiding. These were not mutineers but residents of the city, who trusted to our well known mild rule for pardon. *I am glad to say they were disappointed.*" Is it possible, my Lord, to conceive a more remorseless spirit than is indicated by this passage? Must not the heart that dictated it have been, for the moment, as void of humanity as that of the Nana Sahib himself?

As a further and crowning proof that we are not so free of offence ourselves as to have any right to urge the cruelties committed by the sepoys as an excuse for continuing the war, I shall recall to your Lordship's mind a terrible incident, which, though we have only caught a glimpse of it in one or two of our newspapers, has much surprised and shocked every humane person that has noticed it. After the mutiny at Dinapore two regiments still remained there, a British and a native one—the native regiment, however, having been disarmed, though not because it had revolted, or had even shown any sign of disaffection, but simply as a measure of precaution. Now, under the circumstances, it would, I

defeat and disperse 2,000 armed villagers, who had probably assembled without any thought of fighting, and solely from a common sentiment of horror and fear at the havoc that was going on around them; and if we may judge from the concluding sentence of the letter, the service itself was not a very dangerous one,—only one man being killed, and another wounded on our side; whereas, it seems, we killed 500 of the villagers.

admit, have been quite excusable had this regiment been watched with jealousy and apprehension by the public authorities ; nor was it, perhaps, likely that the British regiment by its side would be upon very friendly terms with it. Inoffensive and defenceless, however, as it was, it had a right to expect that it should be free from any maltreatment, unless it rendered itself liable to punishment by overt acts of mutiny. If this expectation were entertained, it was but little justified by the event ; for, after a time, the British regiment, without any provocation, fell upon the unarmed native soldiers, *and killed and wounded fifty of them* ; not one of the assailants, so far as appears, having received even a scratch in return. Such an outrage, even where sepoy were the victims, could not be passed over without some notice. Accordingly, a few of the ringleaders were singled out, and handed over to a court-martial for trial. And what, my Lord, was the issue ? Why, though standing before their judges with hands still reeking with the blood of innocent and defenceless men, the accused were, one and all, **ACQUITTED !** What is more, Sir Colin Campbell, the Commander-in-chief, approved of and confirmed the judgment ; still more, the editor of the *Times*, writing at the distance of 15,000 miles, and in the serene atmosphere of Printing-house Square, has likewise put the seal of his approbation upon it.* I know that an

* In his comments upon this matter, however, he has taken care to omit all mention of the material fact that the sepoy had been disarmed before the massacre.

attempt has been made to excuse the perpetrators of this bloody deed, on the ground that they were exasperated to frenzy by tidings of the recent slaughter of their comrades in the fatal expedition to Arrah. But, how dire must that frenzy be which could thus drive men to massacre as a means of vengeance! Why all this chorus of indignation at the atrocities of the sepoys, when our own soldiers exercise, and we permit to them, so dreadful a license of bloodshed? Let me add, that the slaughter of our soldiers in the expedition to Arrah was, after all, a perfectly fair act of war,—one of which no European nation need have been in the least ashamed. We were marching in battle array through the country,—we were surprised by a superior force of sepoys, our then open and avowed enemies,—we fought against them as long as we could; but the fortune of war was, for once, adverse to us, and we were obliged to retreat, leaving one-half of our force, dead or wounded, on the field. That our soldiers should deplore this event, and should register a vow in heaven to take a full and honourable vengeance for it on the first battle-field, I can well understand; but that it should act upon them, not as an inspiration to brave deeds of arms, but as an irritant to the massacre of defenceless men, is what I cannot understand, and what I shall always deplore as a savage act, hardly to be exceeded in atrocity by anything the sepoys have done.

Permit me to say, my Lord, I cannot accept it as any excuse for the sanguinary spirit we have dis-

played in the course of this terrible war, that our enemies are all rebels and mutineers, and therefore that we have a right, when they fall into our power, to put them to death. Whether the numerous and motley races of India are, according to any fair and liberal construction of the words, her Majesty's subjects, and, as such, capable of being her Majesty's rebels, is a point of casuistry on which I will not now enter; but this I will affirm—that be they rebels and mutineers or not, it has not been the practice in modern times, and amongst civilized nations, for a monarch, during the continuance of a civil war, to treat his rebel subjects, captured in the course of military operations, otherwise than as *prisoners of war*. Perhaps there never was a sovereign more tenacious of his prerogative than was Charles I.; and, had he dared, he would doubtless have sent to the gallows and the block every man who drew a rebel sword against him. But, in point of fact, during the whole of the long civil conflict in which he was engaged, he did not hand over to the executioner a single prisoner of war. On the contrary, he treated his subjects, taken in flagrant rebellion against him, just as though they were the soldiers of a foreign power at war with him. And why? For a very good reason, namely,—he knew well there were in the ranks of his enemies men bold enough and stern enough not to leave to him any advantage in the bloody game of war they were playing against one another—men who, for every Roundhead rebel he might have hung up or shot, would not have hesitated to hang up or shoot, in

return, half a dozen Cavaliers. Again, during the great war with our revolted American colonies, though every man in the American army, according to the lawyer's narrow creed, was in open rebellion against his sovereign, and was therefore, in strictness, liable to the extreme penalties of the law, the men captured by the royalist troops were admitted to all the privileges of prisoners of war. In a short time, indeed, regular cartels for the exchange of prisoners were made between the two armies, and the usual system of parole was established on both sides. And this is all the more remarkable, because, at the commencement of the troubles, both Houses of Parliament had formally addressed the throne to put in force an obsolete statute (the 35th of Henry VIII.), which authorized the king to bring over to this country, for trial, any of his subjects who had been guilty of treason or rebellion against him beyond his own dominions. Happily, the statute thus evoked from its long repose of more than two hundred years, was, after all, permitted still to slumber on; for, though a few prisoners were, just at first, brought over in irons, and amongst them one man of note—Nathan Allen—not a hair of their heads was ever touched, and in a short time all of them were exchanged for British soldiers captured by the Americans. We may, indeed, feel quite sure of this,—that had the British Government dared to send American soldiers to the scaffold as rebels and traitors, Washington, who on every occasion proved himself equal to the most painful duties, would quickly have taught us, by some startling and ex-

emplary act of the *lex talionis*, that we could not, even during a civil war, altogether disregard the claims of humanity.* To come down more nearly to our own times: we lately saw a fierce civil war raging in Hungary; yet, though the imperial army represented the principle of authority in its supreme pretensions, it did not dare to shed the blood of its enemies otherwise than in fair battle, though those enemies were all rebels, *and very many of them were mutineers*. It is true that, at the end of the war, the emperor did single

* The duke of Richmond having taunted the government with not having brought Nathan Allen to trial, the earl of Suffolk, one of the ministers, said, in reply—"I will tell his grace the true motives which induced the administration to act as they did. We were aware that the rebels had lately made a considerable number of prisoners, and we accordingly avoided bringing Allen to his trial from considerations of prudence,—from a dread of the consequences of retaliation."—(*Parl. Hist. vol. xviii. p. 1199.*) In a debate in the Commons, in 1776, Colonel Barré read to the House a report of a conference between General Washington and Colonel Patterson, in reference to a letter which the latter had been charged by Lord Howe and General Howe to deliver to the American commander. The following extract from this report is curious, as illustrative of the distinct understanding that the war was to be carried on by the two parties on terms of perfect equality:—"General Washington observed that the conduct of several of the English officers would well have merited a different treatment from what they had received, some having refused to give any parole, and others having broken it when given. Colonel Patterson answered that, as to the first, the officers misunderstood the matter very much, and seemed to have mistaken the line of propriety exceedingly; and as to the latter, *General Howe utterly disapproved and condemned their conduct*."—(*Parl. Hist. vol. xviii. p. 1422.*)

out for punishment a few of the ringleaders, whom he brought formally to trial, and put to death as rebels and traitors; an act which, I well remember, provoked a burst of indignation from this country, and furnished material to our newspapers for whole columns glowing with the finest sentiments of outraged humanity;—those very papers which have applauded the summary execution of the sons of the Mogul, though it took place without even the ceremony of a drum-head court-martial, and, if one report of the case be true, under circumstances which leave upon us the imputation of having first beguiled them into our power by misrepresentation, and afterwards slaughtered them.*

* Two other sons of the Mogul have since been seized and put to death under the sentence of a court-martial. And what was the charge against them? That they had instigated, or taken part in, or been privy to, any of the atrocities committed by the sepoys? No; nothing of the kind. Was it, then, that they had been guilty of mutiny? No; for they had never even been in the British service, had never borne arms either for her majesty or for the East-India Company. What was their offence, then? Why, simply this: after the mutiny at Delhi, they had (and, as they alleged, with the greatest reluctance and under a degree of pressure which amounted to compulsion) accepted the command of two sepoy regiments that had revolted to their ancient sovereign. For this they died. The angel of death, in his full terrors, has, indeed, passed over the aged Mogul's house, for it seems that the military authorities at Delhi have followed up the execution of the unhappy man's four sons by that of twenty-four other members of his family. This is not justice; it is a massacre, which, in its remorselessness, reminds one of the proscriptions of a Marius or a Sylla, or of the bloodiest excesses of the French revolution.

By whatever names *we* may choose to call the Indians in revolt, we ought to remember that *they*, like every other army, assert their cause to be a just one, and refer the arbitrement of it to the God of Battles. Hence they cannot and will not admit that we have any right to treat them otherwise than as soldiers engaged in war with us. In vain will you tell them that they are rebels and mutineers, and that, as such, they deserve to die: their answer is, that they are not mutineers, but the great Indian army, fighting for their lawful monarch, the Mogul, and for the deliverance of their country from a foreign conqueror. Understand me, my Lord, I do not deny that it is the duty of those to whom the preservation of the discipline of an army is intrusted, to punish a mutiny, whilst it is as yet only a mutiny, by all those extreme measures which the military code authorizes. But this I do affirm, in the name of justice and humanity, that when a mutiny has swollen into the proportions of a great revolt, when the mutineers form a powerful army capable of taking the field, of standing sieges, and of laying sieges; when they have a common standard, acknowledged leaders, and a cause which does not concern themselves alone as *soldiers*, but enlists on its side the sympathies of great masses of the civil population, you ought not to regard them any longer as mutineers. It is then no longer a mutiny, —it is a *war*. At all events, if you choose, in the spirit of a martinet, or of a mere lawyer, rather than in that of a statesman, to treat an army of a hundred thousand men in revolt as you would a single

company or regiment, you must be prepared to take the natural and certain consequence, and that consequence is what we now witness,—a war, in which reprisal provokes reprisal, and each army, forgetting all the better instincts of humanity, strives to the utmost to outdo its enemy in ruthless deeds ; a war in which massacres follow, as of course, in the train of victory, and the most heroic valour is stained by the most degrading cruelties. I admit, my Lord, that the remorseless spirit in which we are now dealing with all concerned, or suspected of being concerned, in the Indian revolt, is not the sole cause of, or that it justifies, the cruelties alleged to have been perpetrated by the mutineers; but I shall ever declare that it does afford some extenuation of those cruelties, and that it ought to be largely taken into the account, when we are told that it becomes us to prosecute the present war, and to maintain our dominion in India, if for no other purpose, still for the purpose of vengeance.

For my own part, I accept with much reserve the reports which are in circulation as to the cruelties of the sepoys. Why, we know that if any event calculated to stir the public mind happens at Whitechapel, it will be so disfigured and exaggerated, by successive variations and additions, before it reaches Hyde Park Corner, as to be at last hardly recognizable. Such is the common tendency of rumour, even where the love of the wonderful is alone at work. But where, in addition, passion lends its irresistible agency, history tells us, in many a shameful page, that there is no

extravagance, no absurdity, which it cannot make men believe. Just before the breaking out of our great civil war, it made every true Round-head believe that Charles I. had authorized and fostered the Irish rebellion and massacre of 1641. It made them believe, too, that Goring's Cavaliers were cannibals, and had children's bodies served up at their feasts. It made our Protestant forefathers, in Charles II.'s reign, believe, and, what is more, formally record their belief on a public monument—that the great fire of London was the work of the Catholics. It made these same Protestants likewise believe in all the gross, disjointed, self-contradictory, barefaced perjuries of Titus Oates, and “the witnesses”—and, in that belief, send to the block many good and true men, victims to an inflamed public credulity. It made a great many of the “party of order” in France believe the monstrous fiction, that, in the insurrection of June, 1848, the workmen of Paris fought under a standard, bearing the inscription, “*Le vol et le viol.*” It made even the shrewd Duke of Wellington believe, on the representation of eye-witnesses, that the town of Birmingham, on the occasion of a paltry Chartist riot, which happened there a few years ago, had presented a scene of more terrible havoc than any place he had ever seen taken by storm.* But, of a

* The following are the duke's words:—“This large town, one of the largest and greatest manufacturing towns in the kingdom, containing property to an immense amount, has been treated like a town taken by storm. Houses have been burnt down,

certainly, the animosity of the Parliamentarians to the Cavaliers in Charles I.'s reign; of the Protestants to the Catholics in Charles II.'s; of the "party of order" in France, during the heat of the late revolution, to the Socialists; of the Duke of Wellington and his informants to the Chartists, was love itself, when compared with the utter malignity which the English residents in India now bear to the revolted sepoys. How unjust, then, in us to give, as soon as asked for, an absolute and uncritical credence to tales of horror, which have been borne all the way from Delhi or Cawnpore to Calcutta or Bombay, by tongues enflamed by rage and malice, and incapable of any invention or exaggeration too monstrous or unnatural to find entrance into the greedy ears to which it is addressed. I have no doubt, but that many atrocities have been committed by the sepoys, for it is in the very nature of things that, in a time of such violent ferment, this should be the case. But when I remember the deeds of cruelty that have been committed, even by European nations, under the impulse of political or religious fanaticism, —when I remember the reign of terror in France, —when I remember the remorseless massacres which stained the cause of the Spanish patriots, in the earlier stages of their insurrection against the

others have been pillaged, and property to an immense amount has been plundered and destroyed. I have been in many towns taken by storm, but never have such outrages occurred in them as were committed in this town last night."—(*Hansard*, vol. xix, p. 374.)

military domination of the first Napoleon,*—when I remember the horrible barbarities of which the Irish were guilty in their rebellion of 1641, and in their more recent rebellion of 1798;—when I remember these things, and a hundred others like them, I confess I hesitate to believe that the acts of the sepoys, if stated without venom and exaggeration, would be found to have exceeded the ordinary measure of cruelty to be expected from an insurgent and only half-civilized people, in whose hearts were rankling the insults and injuries of a whole century of oppression. I may add, that the editor of the *Hindoo Patriot*, a man of whom the Indian correspondent of the *Times* says, that he is the most highly-educated native in India, denounces, as malignant calumnies, all the fouler outrages imputed to the sepoys,—all those prurient tortures, those hideous abominations, which have been so much talked about, but so little proved. And he might no doubt have added, had he dared, that the stern and cruel measures of repression adopted by the British had been so magnified and distorted by popular rumour amongst the natives, as to make every Hindoo and Mussulman believe that their enemies were possessed with the spirit of demons.†

* See Southey's History of the Peninsular War.

† It has been very generally considered that, in slaying their officers, the sepoys were guilty of an act of mere wanton cruelty. This notion, however, altogether ignores the fact that, on the outbreak of a mutiny, the officers did not remain idle spectators of what was going forward, but bestirred themselves to the utmost, and, in some cases with success, to restore obedience.

I pass on, my Lord, to another offence which has been imputed to the Sepoys, and which has embittered the public mind in this country against them almost as much as the charge of cruelty. We are constantly told of the "ingratitude" of the Sepoys in rising against us: it is said that they have eaten of our salt,* that we have always treated them with kindness and consideration, that their pay has been bountiful, that their discipline has been mild, and that altogether their position has been a highly advantageous one. Now, my Lord, it appears to me that the matter thus charged against the mutineers is really, if fairly construed, a redeeming feature in their conduct. For it amounts to this, that the sepoys have not risen against us because they were, or fancied they were themselves ill-treated or aggrieved, as soldiers, but because they could not repress the natural yearning

Is it then to be wondered at, if the more conspicuous mutineers, who saw their comrades wavering and irresolute under the entreaties, the remonstrances, the commands of their officers, and who knew very well that if their attempt failed they would themselves be blown by dozens from the cannon's mouth, should at once cut the matter short by firing at the men who alone seemed to stand between them and success? No doubt, in some cases, the acts of violence committed by the sepoys do not admit of this extenuation; but we should remember that when men once begin to do deeds of blood, they are soon wrought up to a pitch of wild frenzy, in which they lose all self-control, and become, as it were, *possessed*. This, however, God knows, is not peculiar to the sepoys.

* This is not the fact; for they were paid out of taxes levied in their own country.

of their hearts for the independence of their country. Surely, if we mete out to the sepoys the same measure of justice which, in a similar case, we should claim for ourselves, we shall admit it to be to their honour, that, though especially benefited themselves by the foreign rule under which they served, they spurned all such narrow egotistical considerations, and thought only of their duty to their country. Suppose, my Lord, that the camp of Boulogne had not been an idle threat, but that the first Napoleon had actually invaded and conquered us, and that he had afterwards been silly or cynical enough to attempt to keep us in subjection by means of a pampered army of *Englishmen*: should we stigmatize that army as "basely ungrateful," as guilty of "a foul treason," * if, on the first favourable opportunity, it rose against our conquerors, and re-established our independence? On the contrary, is there a man amongst us who would not have strained his voice till he was hoarse in huzzas for England's noble deliverers? Austria, being a military despotism, I have no doubt but that her soldiers are a privileged class, and are exceedingly well treated, as a reward for their services in enabling the Government to treat all other classes exceedingly ill; yet I never heard any one in this country denounce "the base ingratitude" or the "foul treason" of those Hungarian soldiers who, during the late civil war, deserted from the Austrian standards, and fought the battles of their country against their former

* Lord Brougham's expressions.

sovereign. Far from it; we gave them our warmest sympathy, we hailed them as heroes and patriots, and we revere as martyrs those amongst them, who, at the end of the war, fell into the hands of their conqueror, and were mercilessly dealt with by him as "rebels and mutineers." The plain truth is, the more the sepoys were pampered by us, the less reason is there for suspecting them of any mere selfish feeling in rising against us; and, consequently, the more obvious is it that their mutiny was inspired by the (to Englishmen) no very unintelligible or unworthy sentiment of impatience of a foreign yoke. I cannot admit, then, that the "ingratitude" of the sepoys ought to stand for a moment in the way of the debt of justice which, according to my view, we owe to their country.

As a contrast to the pitiless policy we have recently pursued in dealing with "rebels" and "mutineers," I submit to your lordship the following noble proclamation, addressed, on the outbreak of the war with our revolted American colonies, by General Carleton, Governor of Quebec, to the Canadian militia, who had just beaten a body of rebels in the neighbourhood of Quebec:—

"Whereas I am informed that many of his Majesty's deluded subjects of the neighbouring provinces, labouring under wounds and divers disorders, are dispersed in the neighbouring woods and parishes, and in great danger of perishing for want of proper assistance: all captains and other officers of militia are hereby commanded to make diligent search for all such distressed persons, and afford

them all necessary relief, and convey them to the general hospital, where proper care shall be taken of them. All reasonable expenses which may be incurred in complying with this order shall be repaid by the receiver-general; and, lest a consciousness of past offences should deter such miserable wretches from receiving the assistance which their distressed situation may require, I hereby make known to them that, as soon as their health is restored, they shall have free liberty to return to their respective provinces.”*

Bear in mind, my Lord, that the objects of all this tenderness were “rebels;” rebels, too, who, drawing their blood from this country, owed a natural allegiance to the British crown, and whose grievances, more abstract than practical, were, in comparison with those of the Indian people under our rule, as “a mole-hill to Olympus.”

There is one more topic which calls for notice. How—in what spirit—is India, if re-conquered, henceforth to be governed? I can anticipate the answer. I shall be told, no doubt, of the many blessings that we have in store for India, as soon as peace is restored there: we shall span the great rivers with bridges; we shall spread over the country a network of railways; we shall form tanks and reservoirs in the thirsty desert; here, we shall make canals for navigation, there, for irrigation; we shall establish colleges, in all the great centres of population, to educate the people, and thus raise them,

* Annual Register, vol. xix. p. 255.

morally and intellectually, in the social scale; we shall encourage husbandry; we shall encourage trade; we shall encourage European colonization; in a word, we shall teach the Hindoos, in a hundred ways, how happy a thing it is for them to be under the yoke of England. Alas, my Lord, hell, they say, is paved with good intentions; and I strongly suspect that we have here nothing but a heap of materials for that same unlucky pavement. I ask, is it to be believed that men, who, from the very beginning have betrayed all the arrogance of conquerors, and whose arrogance is now envenomed by the direst vindictiveness at finding that their bondmen, no longer patient of their yoke, are too dangerous to be any longer simply despised,—is it to be expected, I ask, that when India is once more subdued, and lies at our mercy, these men will, all at once, and for the first time, display an amiable and generous spirit towards the conquered country,—will think of nothing else than the welfare of the subject race, and will bury for ever in oblivion all the events of the present war,—the battles lost or won in it,—the massacres perpetrated by or on them, their escapes, their fears, their fierce vows of vengeance? No, my Lord, it requires no very deep knowledge of human nature to enable us to predict, with confidence, that, India once reconquered, our reign there will be a reign of terror,—a reign of terror, perhaps, such as the world has never before witnessed. Admit that the government at home, somewhat aloof from the fierce spirit which agitates our vast dependency, should be dis-

posed to throw oil upon the troubled waves, still its beneficent intentions will inevitably be frustrated, as has constantly been the case from the very commencement of our Eastern empire, by the passions, the prejudices, and the interests of the European residents, who will be sure to see, in a subdued rebellion, a happy opportunity for inflicting upon the conquered country every evil which cupidity, scorn, fear, revenge, and triumph, can inspire.

How the poor Catholics of Ireland fared after their complete discomfiture at the time of our revolution we may learn from history. But in that case there were many circumstances which tended to mitigate the rigour of conquest. Though the conquerors were Protestants, and the conquered Catholics, still they were, even in religion, in one respect alike—they were both Christians; moreover, they both spoke the same language, had the same complexions, were, if somewhat different in race, alike Europeans, and lived constantly side by side in relations more or less friendly: whereas the Hindoos are kin to ourselves in no respect, except in so far as they are men; they live altogether apart from us; and a war, cruel and exterminating in a far greater degree than that which made the Protestants the masters in Ireland, and the Catholics their helots, is now effacing from the hearts of both parties to our Indian conflict every sentiment of humanity. I will tell you, my Lord, how we shall rule the reconquered Indians: we shall rule them much as the planters of Georgia or Louisiana would rule their slaves after a bloody and unsuc-

cessful revolt; but with this difference, that the planters, for their own sake, will always have some tenderness towards their slaves, whose bodies are their property; whereas the English residents in India will feel and act towards the defeated natives simply as enemies — enemies feared, hated, and despised, at one and the same time.

Permit me, my Lord, to indulge in a somewhat cynical smile at the amiable credulity which supposes that we shall ever take pains to educate the Hindoos, to give them intellectual and moral culture. Knowledge is power, and if we give it to India, depend upon it she will make use of it as a weapon against our dominion, more especially if it be accompanied by that dignity of character, that self-respect, which always accompany moral culture. In sad truth, to govern the Hindoos we *must* stupefy and demoralize them: such is the base tenure by which we hold our Eastern dominion. Assuredly it is not in the nature of things that two hundred millions of people, taught by science to make the secret powers of nature do their bidding, enlightened by history, and exalted by moral and political truths, should for ever continue subject to a handful of foreigners thinly scattered over their country, and no longer able to strike discontent with awe by the spell of an intrinsic superiority. No, my Lord, I say you will do nothing in earnest to educate the Hindoos—nothing to lift them up to our own level—nothing to make them good and great: I say you will not—I say you *dare not*.

Whether the government of our Eastern do-

minions remains as it is at present, or be transferred to the Crown is, in my opinion, a matter of little moment so far as the native Indians are concerned ; because, in either case, our rule in India will still be the harsh one of conquest. But however this may be, as an *Englishman*, I protest against the change which is now meditated, a change which will give to the Crown a large amount of additional patronage, and which audaciously assumes, contrary to a thousand facts, and especially contrary to the genius of the English constitution, that great independent powers in the state are nuisances, and that the only effectual security for the the due administration of a public trust is to lodge it in the central government. I pray, my Lord, that India may not be avenged for the loss of *her* independence by being instrumental in shaking our freedom.

And now, my Lord, I have done. I am not, I assure you, vain or romantic enough to believe that any poor words of mine can alter the current of popular feeling, which has already set in so powerfully in an opposite direction ; a current, along which your Lordship, with all that dexterity which is your Lordship's well-known characteristic, will, no doubt, glide, gaily and triumphantly for the present. For my own part, however bootless my task may be, I shall, at all events, have the satisfaction (no small one to me) of having given a free vent to sentiments that have long been struggling within me for utterance. Whatever, my Lord, may be the fashion of the moment, I must continue to denounce injustice and oppression, wheresoever, or by whomso-

ever, they may be committed; but especially I must denounce, whilst I especially deplore them, when they are committed by my own countrymen:—a race, happily blessed with freedom in the midst of servile nations, and, therefore, bound to make manifest to the world, by a policy of signal magnanimity, how glorious a thing freedom is; how it makes men humane, whilst it makes them valiant,—how it inspires the sentiments that glow in the patriot's heart, whilst it tempers even those sentiments by the supreme control of justice.

I am,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's humble and obedient servant,

A PLAIN SPEAKER.

POSTSCRIPT.

In the foregoing pages, I have expressed a strong conviction, that the current tales about the atrocities of the sepoys require a large abatement, in order to bring them within the limits of truth. That I have done so upon just grounds, let the following short but significant paragraph, which has, this very day, appeared in the *Times*, bear witness. Unhappily, whilst the truth has been slowly struggling into light, the passionate delusion of the hour has hurried us into many acts, which, had they been

done by any other nation, we should have been the first most strenuously to condemn. Here is the paragraph I refer to:—

“ With reference to cases of alleged mutilation by the mutineers and natives of India, we are requested to state that several members of the General Committee of the Military Relief Fund have made careful inquiries, and have ascertained that no such cases have come down the Ganges in any of the vessels of the Inland Steam Navigation Company at Calcutta, nor have any come to England in any ship belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company.”

LONDON,
Feb. 1, 1858.

THE END.

RAMDOOLAL DEY, THE BENGALÉE MILLIONAIRE.

THE great men of history are not unfrequently the greatest sinners. Unscrupulous kings, devastating warriors, politicians whose feet never pressed the pavement of a church, legislators who dipped their codes in human blood—these form a tableau on the records of a nation's progress, invested with a lurid light—invested nevertheless with a large interest. We gaze in wonder and admiration on a successful cut-throat—one who possessed the faculty of commanding masses of brutal men to tear out the entrails of other men, to spring like wild beasts upon their fellows in creation, to hack and hew into bloody little pieces the human form divine. We examine in every light, glaring and softened, by torch light and by twilight, the characters and achievements of such men—we enter their tombs to obtain a vivid and livid view of their great features reposing in death. Their history gladdens our hearts. We never feel tired of contemplating the laurels which they had won, though the plants from which these were plucked may have been watered with the blood of hecatombs. The terrible in nature so strikes our fancy, that the mild and beautiful in nature is compelled to give place to the rougher material. People rush in thousands to witness the falls of Niagra—the lazy sources of the Nile are left to the research of the solitary adventurer whose companions are only his dog and his rifle. But howsoever the world may follow with huzzas and up-turned eyes the strong in war and the vehement in council, illuminate its cities in adoration of the victor on many fields, fête and caress the men whose genius riding rough-shod over every sentiment of morality, and upsetting every bulwark of truth, founded em-

pires on the ashes of burned cities and the blood of broken hearts. Yet the history of private life, of pure, spotless citizen life, of life commenced in difficulty and in struggle, in darkness and in eclipse, but emerging through a combination of unlooked for and unprayed for circumstances, by the simple force of honesty and a rigidly administered will, into a blaze of light, wondrous to behold and solemn to contemplate—furnishes the key stone of national enterprize and forms the foundation on which rises tier after tier the bold, battlemented structure of social and commercial pre-eminence. The tramp of the warrior and the twist of the statesman startle and stagger us. But the slow silent growth of the wealthy burgher, the halo which surrounds the citizen king, the absence of fuss which distinguishes his career, the sterling merit of his heart, the aroma of kindliness which he sheds around him, making the world in which he moves and breathes, and which he sensibly influences, full of sunshine—these sink into our souls like a dew drop, invigorating them and arming them with the elements and the resources of every day life; filling them with the holiest aspirations and inspirations; supplying motive power, and imparting to them that upward spring which carries them straight into the presence of their Maker.

Ramdooolal Dey, a sketch of whose life I purpose to lay before you, was one of nature's aristocrats. It is neither East, nor West, nor North, nor South, which produces such men as a monopoly. That race is a myth, that the genus man is a cognate species in every part of the world, that the breath which inspires it is neither white nor black, but colorless—is illustrated by the history of lives such as that of Ramdooolal. The same qualities of head and heart, the same affection for truth, the same adherence to method, the same reliance on human nature after thoroughly testing and weighing it, which brought wealth to

the coffers and renown to the names of English and American merchants, achieved similar success on behalf of the Hindoo; raising him to that height which few can reach though many aspire to reach it.

The father of Ramdoolal Dey was wretchedly poor. Not far from DumDum lies the village of Rekjanie—a village even the name of which is not familiar to the residents of Calcutta—a contemptible place occupied by a purely agricultural population. In this place Bulloram Sircar eked out a hard livelihood by undertaking to teach the rudiments of the Bengalee language to the children of the surrounding peasantry. He lived in a hut the remnants of which may yet be seen. One of his pupils—a Mahomedan, 95 years of age, is still alive. Caligraphy was the peculiar merit of this village domini—perhaps his only merit. The gains from his profession were the scantiest. It was the middle of the eighteenth century. The English in Calcutta were still a colony of traders. Clive had not yet won the field of Plassey. The tyrant of Moorshedabad continued to fill the world with his enormities. The value of learning in such an age may be easily estimated; and the position of the professors of learning, such learning at least as Ramdoolal's father Bulloram possessed, was the most contemptible. The domini, it is believed, was paid in grain; for he visited Calcutta twice a week on market days driving a bullock before him laden with straw. This straw he disposed of for a trifle; and this trifle was his sole cash receipt. Even such a hard destiny did not run smoothly. To the pinching cares of poverty were superadded the terrors of war. The Maharrattas invaded Bengal in 1741-42. For ten successive years they continued their eruptions. During their last visit in 1851-52 Ramdoolal's father abandoned his home, and fled with the rest of the villagers for his life. Property he had none. But his wife was

enceinte. Whilst a refugee several miles away from the range of the marauding bands of the enemy, the poor woman felt the pangs of maternity; and Ramdoolal like Akbar was thus born in a desert. The early history of the man like the early history of other self-made men, is a painful record only of privation and toil. His father could not give him even the rudiments of his own vernacular. That beautiful caligraphy of which he was the possessor, he failed to transmit to his son. For he died within a few years of the birth of that son and within two months of the death of his wife—leaving Ramdoolal an orphan, without friends, in the wide world. Another son and a daughter had been added to his family before his death and the three orphans retired for shelter and support to the cottage of their maternal grand-father Ramsoonder Biswas of Calcutta. The means of this grand-father were the most wretched that can be imagined. He lived upon the fruits of beggary—the lowest kind of beggary—beggary by the handful—every day, grinding beggary. He found it already a hard conflict to bring up his own children. But the domestic feelings and affections of the Hindoo, his pure benevolent love for kith and kin, the result doubtless of caste and the isolated condition of his social life, do not permit him to weigh consequences or stand paltering between duty and necessity when a relative is in distress. His simple mess of rice and curry, or rice only without curry in desperate cases, is at the service of all who may demand a share in it and have a right to demand it. Most cheerfully is this mess divided, though the number of mouths amongst which the division is made may, in consequence of it, be all half fed. It is a common address of the Hindoo to his needy friends, “You shall not want for food so long as I have a handful to eat.” The nation is educated to this kind of benevolence and the man who turns away a beggar from his door is accounted

accurst—not the beggar of course who solicits money, but the beggar who demands food. Ramdoolal's grandfather received the orphans with open arms. He begged more lustily for his living than before. But his wife was not an idle woman. One of the ordinary occupations of the poor Hindoo female, is to husk and clean rice for the market. The gains of this kind of industry are contemptible; yet they suffice to procure the still more contemptible rations, eaten once during the twenty four hours after crushing religious austerities, by the Hindoo matron. Ramdoolal's grand-mother engaged herself in this occupation and assisted her husband materially thereby in maintaining the entire family. Her incessant toil at the tread mill enabled her not merely to provide her own food, but also to save sufficient rice for distribution amongst the beggars on the road sides as she proceeded at break of day to perform her ablutions and devotions on the banks of the Ganges. Poor as she was, she did not forget that there were objects in creation more pitiable than herself. The rich, supplied with every luxury, and supplied without toil, are often callous and even cruel. The tremendous battle of life—that fearful state of existence in which the vital breath flickers at every gust of poignant distress—when the struggle for a day's food compresses in its heroic toil the trials of an ordinary life time, cannot be realised by the classes born in the purple of society. Ramdoolal's grand-mother did not belong to any of these classes. The wife of a beggar who lived upon the charity of his neighbours, she was familiar from bitter experience with the distractions and demoralisations of poverty. Hence the devotion with which, next to the worship of her God, she tended the poor—hence the arduous labour at the *Dhenkie* that she may be furnished with the means, wretched as was her own destiny, for relieving the wretchedness of those floundering in a

lower abyss of misery than herself. Such a grandmother was a teacher more efficacious and impressive than all the blustering professors in our schools, more persuasive and eloquent than all the ponderous philosophical tomes in our libraries. Fortune smiled at last upon her virtues, for a few years after she had undertaken the nursing of the orphans of her deceased daughter, she obtained the situation of an important domestic, *viz.* cook, in the household of Mudden Mohun Dutt, one of the richest native gentlemen of Calcutta at the time. In caste she was the equal of her employer. Hence her position was not exactly that of a menial, though her emoluments were not a whit superior to those of a waiting maid. This wondrous custom of caste indeed is a standing puzzle in Hindoo society. Though Ramdoolal's grand-mother was a salaried servant, yet she was a gentlewoman entitled to respect and to be treated with as high a consideration as any member of the family. The man or woman at whose hands a Hindoo can eat his food is an object of his reverence. Proved vice alone can make such a person infamous—the accident of wealth or its opposite does not change the gift of God. Ramdoolal's grand-mother found little difficulty in introducing her grand-son into the household of her opulent employer. As I have said before, the Hindoo shuts his door against no body who claims its protection. The status of the lady was a sufficient passport to the lad. The child had a right to domiciliation in the house in which its grand-mother was an honored domestic. Heads of families in Bengal whose means are not very ample, would be disgraced did they deny shelter of this description to the children of their servants. Mudden Mohun Dutt, the Dewan of the Export Warehouse, the rival in wealth of Rajah Navokrishna, was the last man to contest this right. Hundreds were daily fed at his house and enjoyed every comfort at his expense. His consent

even was not necessary to add the lad to the long list of his dependents. Thus Ramdoolal entered the portals which, in the palmiest days of his prosperity, he never approached except with uncovered feet and folded hands. In this mansion of his rich patron he commenced his studies. The energy and will with which these were prosecuted soon made him an excellent penman and a fast accountant. The Pundit who taught the vernaculars to the sons of Muddun Mohun Dutt, was bound to give lessons also to the grand-child of Mudden Dutt's female cook. But the slender means of the lad's relative opposed obstacles to the purchase of the needful writing materials not capable of being easily overcome. So long as Ramdoolal was learning to write the alphabets, the tough palm leaf which knows no waste, which can be washed clean at any moment and as often as may be necessary—once purchased for a couple of pice, could outlast an entire course. But the next stage in the education of the Bengalee is a plantain leaf one. When the child has mastered the mystery of forming his letters, when his hand has been habituated to the discipline of correctly writing over his copy or writing in the faintest resemblance to his copy, his second step in caligraphy is to write on the plantain leaf. From the palm leaf to the plantain leaf is a promotion of no ordinary significance. The household God is worshipped more earnestly and elaborately on that day, the offerings of rice and sweetmeat placed before him are more costly, the student is clothed in a new *dhootie* and the tutor is rewarded with a gratuity. The vernacular schools of our day have taken away the romance and the religion of education. The slate has supplanted both the palm leaf and the plantain leaf. But in the early days of Ramdoolal these ancient materials of education were the only ones known to the country. Rich and poor were equally beholden to them for the

rudiments of penmanship, or I should more properly say reedmanship—for quills were then unknown or unhonored “instruments of little men” in the East. Ramdoolal’s means were too limited to enable him to purchase every day the quantity of plantain leaves required for his exercises. The broad leaves of the Banian tree served him instead at the commencement. But his mind even at this early stage was full of resources. Where other men would have despaired, he deliberated. Observing that the sons of his rich patron threw away the plantain leaves after they had been once used by them, he considered whether by careful washing he could not make these sufficiently clean to write his exercises upon. The Ganges rolled close by the house in which he was being brought up, and Ramdoolal put his plan into immediate execution. It is not that the rich and generous Mudden Dutt who loved the boy on account of his soft quiet temper and vivacious intelligence, would have grudged, if the matter had been laid before him, to supply the grand-child of his cook with a bundle of plantain leaves for his writing exercises. But Ramdoolal had the grace to remember under how numerous obligations he already lay to his patron. His heart was too big to demand favours where his ingenuity could supply all that he wanted. These carefully cleaned plantain leaves were as good as new ones; and the perseverance and skill which enabled that fatherless boy in maturer years to become the first native merchant in Calcutta, amassing a colossal fortune, may be traced in its germ to that epoch in his life, in which, day after day, with the sun beating upon his unprotected head and his feet dipped into the stream of the Ganges, he washed the ink from the thin fragile plantain leaves and smoothed the crumples in them in order to complete his education. The ardour and industry with which his studies were pursued may be conceived from this

simple story of his childhood. But the wave of Western learning had not yet reached the shores of India. The Peninsula presented one unbroken surface of ignorance, dense, appalling ignorance. The clang of battle resounded through its length and its breadth. Enlarged ideas of duty—even the selfish principle of human conduct in its deep far-seeing phase, had not commenced to influence the English ruler. Schools were not considered a necessary element of good government. All that the native population was expected to know was its own vernacular with a mere colloquial command over the English language. Ramdoolal mastered his own vernacular—was a shrewd accountant and could express himself intelligibly to an English Mate or Captain.

Armed with this knowledge, at the age of 16—with a brother to support and an aged grand-father to preserve in his declining years from the toil and the indignity of begging alms every day in sun and in rain for his maintenance—Ramdoolal offered himself for the hard, ruthless battle of life. With another friendless boy like himself, Nund Coomar Bose, who afterwards rose to the Dewanship of the Government Salt Golas in Tumlook—a position the equivalent of which for honor or for emolument is not to be found in the present day, he joined the long train of *omedwars* or applicants for employment, who daily besieged Mudden Mohun Dutt with their petitions and their prayers. The two friends, whose affection for each other terminated only with their death, after many disappointments, were at last desired by their patron to attend his office and learn business. Idleness or fear of toil was not in the composition of either. But one day as they set out from home the sun seemed to be more unmercifully hot than ever and a furious dust storm nearly blinded them. Umbrellas they were too poor to purchase, so shelter from neither sun nor dust

could be obtained on the road. Blistered by the former and blinded by the latter, the two friends called a council of war. It was resolved that, as they had no regular employment, no real duties to discharge, no responsibilities to fulfil—they could, considering the oppressive heat and the harassing dust storm, absent themselves that day from their task of doing nothing. They retraced their steps accordingly to their patron's house where they lived—and went to sleep. That sleep was long and heavy. Mudden Mohun Dutt on his return from business found them still snoring. Suspecting that the lads had fallen ill, for it was not their wont to be so idle, he gently roused them and demanded to know if they were unwell. Ramdoolal started to his feet, rubbed his eyes and felt as if the recording Angel had caught him sinning. He might have easily saved his reputation with one on whom an impression of his industry was the only means of his prosperity. He was still a dependent upon the charity of his patron and it was evidently for his interest that that patron should not entertain the idea that he was nursing a slothful vagabond. The temptation on his side was exceedingly great, almost irresistible, to tell a lie and account by a story of temporary, or sudden illness, for the position, unusual and disgraceful in which he had been discovered. But the truth that burned intensely in his bosom sternly forbade recourse to any such subterfuge. Ramdoolal despised to tell a falsehood. With downcast eyes and faltering voice he confessed that the sun and the dust had enervated him, had restrained him from taking his accustomed place in his patron's office, had driven him back to the house where he unconsciously fell asleep. The big patron smiled sarcastically. A sneer curled on his lips as he remarked if Ramdoolal feared sun and dust it was not likely that he should ever obtain employment. Stung by that just reprimand the boy resolved to shew his

mettle. He prayed for the contemptible post of a Bill Sircar, a post of which privation and personal discomfort are the most prominent conditions. The energy and toil with which he fulfilled its duties are beyond description. Mudden Dutt's large business relations procured him creditors in every part of the country. Ramdoolal's plodding feet were thus on every shore and on every carpet. Nor sun, nor rain, nor wind daunted him. From Calcutta to Barrackpore or Teetaghur was an ordinary journey to him on foot. If the gentleman to whom he took a Bill at either of these places demanded an explanation of any doubtful item, Ramdoolal returned all the way back to Calcutta and obtaining the needful particulars from his employer trotted off again to realise the Bill. On one occasion he had to receive a large sum of money from an officer at DumDum. He was kept waiting until evening. An Englishman has no idea of the distractions of a poor Collecting Sircar. That he may have dangers on the road, that he may have a sick child at home to whom he must be naturally anxious to return as soon as possible, that a thousand little things may demand an early termination of his disagreeable mission—are views in the life of the Collecting Sircar which do not readily occur to the rich. Ramdoolal was kept waiting till night succeeded to day and he was then sent away with a large sum of money in his custody. At that time brigandage was a prevailing evil in the suburbs of Calcutta. The warlike element in Bengal dispersed by the victory at Plassey was still hanging in a dense mass upon the civil population, biding its time and plundering without restraint of law or Police the unprotected or the ill protected. The road from DumDum to the metropolis is even now unsafe. In the early days of Ramdoolal, he was a very Roostum who attempted to pass through it at night

with treasure in his charge. Ramdoolai entrusted with a large amount in cash at an hour at which it would have been insane to think of returning to Calcutta, was pushed to his wit's end how to dispose of himself for the night. He might have sought the shelter of a Hindoo cottage; but he was apprehensive in the then disturbed state of society, that his host, should he chance to discover the nature of his accompaniments, may be unable to resist the temptation of becoming suddenly rich by one act of murder. Hungry and way-worn he dared not present himself in the Bazar of a cantonment infested by soldiers not yet firmly used to British discipline. His mind full of resources settled itself to a definite course at last, without much further debate. As a fakir passing the night under the shelter of a tree it would be impossible for any one to suspect that there was money in his possession. Divesting himself of all superfluous clothing, with his bag of treasure under his head, he laid himself down—not to sleep, but to defy the screeching owl and the yelling jackal. He manfully resisted the allurements of the somnolent deity, and when day dawned, offered up a prayer to Heaven for his safety.

These hard trials of honesty and wit did not fail to make a sensible impression upon his employer. All this time his pay was the ordinary salary of a collecting Sircar *viz.* Rs. 5 per mensem. Ramdoolai's habits however were so simple, his comforts so few, his necessities so limited, that even out of this contemptible emolument he contrived by rigid parsimony to save as much as a 100 rupees. This was a treasure indeed to the poor man. But he valued the treasure not on his own selfish account. Gratitude, though some of the friends of the Hindoo race are charitable enough to believe that the word is not to be found in the Bengalee or Oordoo Dic-

tionary, lay at the base of Ramdoolal's character. He did not forget that his maternal grand-father, had fed him when an orphan scarcely 5 years old, out of the uncertain gains of every day street beggary—that his maternal grand-mother had daily laboured at the treadmill in order to supply him and his little brother with all that they wanted. In the declining years of those two relatives Ramdoolal, now grown strong and sturdy, felt that it was his turn to feed them. That grand-father's reason had been affected. At his seventieth year he believed he was still a child. He applied himself with the unavailing assiduity of madness to the English spelling book and he scribbled over sheets and sheets every day in the hope of obtaining employment at the proper time as a clerk. Besides himself and his wife, he had children to support. But Ramdoolal relieved them all from want. The small capital of 100 Rupees which he had saved out of his pay, he invested in a timber Depôt at Baug-Bazar. Morning and evening, during all his spare moments, he attended to the business of this Depôt, for its profits were to be devoted entirely to the support of his grand-father's family. Mudden Mohun Dutt pleased with these admirable traits in the character of his young protégé, admiring also his intelligence, his industry and his pluck, promoted him from the low position, emoluments and opportunities of a collecting sircar to the higher rôle of a ship sircar. The pay of the new office was 10 rupees a month, with lots of *buxis*; alternated of course by blows from ship captains, mates and crew. In this sphere the genius of Ramdoolal shone resplendent; the resources of his mind became luminously developed with every difficulty with which he had to grapple. His power of endurance, his courage, his keen observation, his ready wit, made him an invaluable ship sircar. Though he could not write, he could talk English fluently. A ship sircar

has to combat elements which are not of a very hopeful character. He has to go out into the mouth of the river in all weathers, to superintend the loading and discharge of cargo—to count out the bales and the boxes discharged as well as the bales and the boxes delivered. Often he has to maintain a hot altercation, terminated not unfrequently again by blows, with Captains of vessels, regarding the number of bales and boxes short delivered. A man with a chicken's heart can never fulfil these duties honestly. On the other hand, the opportunities for speculation are enormous. Ramdoolal was as honest as he was courageous. Fortune also befriended him. On one occasion the frail bark which conveyed him to Diamond Harbour, capsized—it was flood tide. He swam up the stream fourteen miles and was rescued only at Kidderpore. These risks paved the way to his reward. At another time a violent storm overtook him and his friend Nundcoomar Bose at Diamond Harbour. They found refuge in a fisherman's hut. A *jatla* or rushes woven into a mattress was given them for a bed. The two friends passed the night covering themselves with this rude apology for a sheet, but they found it to be so warm and comfortable that in the days of their highest prosperity they had a *Jatla* always under their bed sheets. That the risks incurred by Ramdoolal during this stage of his life paved the way to his reward, has not been lightly observed above. His visits to Diamond Harbour gave him the opportunity of correctly estimating the value of numerous sunken vessels put up for sale in Tulloh's Auction. A large ship with a full cargo had foundered close to the mouth of the Hooghly. Ramdoolal had carefully ascertained the position and nature of the wreck. The facilities for lifting it up or recovering a portion of the cargo, were also thoughtfully weighed by him. It chanced soon after that his employer sent him with

some money to the auction of Tulloh and Company to make certain purchases. The thing marked in the catalogue had been sold however a few minutes before his arrival. He missed it. But the auctioneer was lustily crying up a wreck which formed the next lot. Ramdoolal had little difficulty in making out that the wreck was no other than the one, the condition of which he had only a few days ago through the mere force of habit, so carefully ascertained. Curiosity led him to witness the sale. The upset price was so ridiculously small that he was tempted to put in a bid. Few there were in that sale room who knew any thing at all about the ship or its probable value. Ramdoolal's bid, perhaps the only bid, was therefore accepted. The vessel with its entire cargo was knocked down to him for 14,000 rupees. The Sircar registered the sale however in the name of his master and paid the purchase money out of the sum entrusted to him on account of the lot he was commissioned to buy but had so unfortunately missed. He had not yet quitted the premises of Tulloh and Company, when an English gentleman rushed wildly into the sale room, anxiously enquiring whether the ship which Ramdoolal had just purchased, had been as yet put up for sale. The auctioneer blandly informed the gentleman that he had come one day after the fair; for that the lot had been just knocked down to a native sircar for 14,000 rupees who had also completed the bargain by paying the whole of the purchase money. The English gentleman looked agonizingly in all directions. Could the Sircar be found? He was found at last in the smoking room of Tulloh's auction—that haven of refuge to the weary and the wandering. The gentleman seemed to be closely connected with the ship which Ramdoolal had purchased. He knew the real worth of the vessel and the worth also of the cargo it contained. He had intended to come in and bid for the lot.

But he missed his opportunity—and there he stood baiting and bullying the sircar who had not missed but forestalled him. Ramdoolal was not certainly either a coward or a fool. The threats of the European failed to make any impression on a man who perfectly well understood his rights and was proof against violence. He smiled whilst the European raved. He knew he had checkmated him. Slowly the latter changed his tactics. He offered Ramdoolal a profit. The sircar was quite agreeable to an offer of that nature. But he understood also the true character of his venture. The Englishman haggled and haggled, until he discovered that the person whom he confronted, was one of those shrewd Bengalees whom even the devil could not overreach. He stumped out handsomely at last and Ramdoolal transferred the sale to him for a profit of little less than a lac of rupees. But the money belonged to Ramdoolal's master. Though Mudden Dutt could not have dreamed that his sircar had purchased a ship in his name and paid for it out of funds entrusted to him for other objects, though the whole of those funds Ramdoolal was now in a position to return to his employer without the latter knowing any thing about the profit that had been made by its means, though the sircar was vegetating on only 10 rupees a month, rushing daily into the mouth of every danger for that paltry sum, and the temptation to secure an honorable independence would therefore under the circumstances have upset less firm and honest natures—Ramdoolal whose principles were his brightest treasure, whose heart despised deceit in any form, whose moral rectitude in later life awed Europeans, never once suspected—the thought did not for a moment tantalise him—that the profit thus secured on his bargain belonged to any other person than his master. Indeed, his conscience smote him for having purchased the ship

at all—for having, without the order or permission of his employer, risked that employer's money on such a bargain, for being unable to resist the temptation of doing an act for which he might justly be blamed. More as a repentant sinner than a triumphant servant, did he repair to Mudden Dutt's office. Hesitatingly he sought the presence of that rich Dewan. With folded hands and the manner of a penitent at the confessional he recounted the story of his purchase with the story of his profit. He prayed to be pardoned for the presumption of which he had been guilty—and he laid the roll of Bank notes amounting to nearly a lac of rupees, at the feet of his master. That master was not a grasping oppressor; not a miser who hoarded up treasure for the satisfaction merely of gazing upon it. Mudden Mohun Dutt, one of the progenitors of the rich family of Dutts at Nimtola, had a princely soul. He stared in amazement at the simplicity of Ramdoolal—so unlike the world, so Roman in his honesty—nothing could stop the fortune of that man. The mark of a positive law was on his forehead—greatness was in his nature. He had cultivated great habits. Another man nursing similar principles of moral behaviour, possessing the same shrewd powers of observation and thrown amidst opportunities of the same kind, must inevitably be as great as Ramdoolal, as fortunate, as excellent an example to humanity. Men content themselves with the simple conclusion that Ramdoolal was lucky—forgetting that his character furnished the real key to his good fortune. How few, it may be asked, would have acted as Ramdoolal acted in the position then occupied by him, in the opportunity within his grasp, in the temptation which beset him, in the apparent absence of any grievous moral taint from a contrary behaviour. Mudden Dutt was stunned and bewildered by the frank integrity of the man. He blessed him and said, “ Ramdoolal the money is yours.

Your good fortune has sent it to you. You sowed the seed and you shall reap the harvest." Tears choked the power of utterance as Ramdoolal gratefully acknowledged the gift. No small one it was to a sircar on ten rupees a month. But the windfall did not turn his head. He continued to serve Mudden Dutt as long as his patron lived—continued to serve honestly, faithfully, obsequiously; and though the transactions into which the money thus secured to him enabled him to enter, made him an exceedingly rich man, one of the richest men in Calcutta in fact, before Mudden Dutt died, still Ramdoolal regularly besieged him on pay day for the stipend of 10 rupees which he had a right to draw from his good patron. The maxim which he seemed to have adopted himself and which he recommended to others was this, that no harm could befall a man who, in the days of his prosperity, often contemplated the days of his adversity. A poor fellow once happened to draw a prize of Rs. 5,000 at the Government lottery. As may be expected, he was transported with joy. His head became giddy—sleep forsook his eyelids. He used to lie tossing in bed contemplating a thousand ways of employing his capital. In his distraction he broke his condition to a few friends. These unanimously advised him to seek Ramdoolal and ask his opinion. The man waited upon the millionaire who was then in the zenith of his prosperity. Ramdoolal patiently heard all he had to say, then quietly advised him to invest his money in the funds and never give up the habit of casting constant retrospections on his former state.

The lac of rupees thus obtained became the keystone of Ramdoolal's fortune—the first stratum on which was piled up that colossal wealth which was the wonder and the envy of his contemporaries. From this small beginning, thus consecrated by an act of faith which in the present state of mercantile morality, the swindles

in the share market and the robberies in Joint Stock Companies, may well appear romantic—was raised up an estate, which, at the time of the death of the accumulator, amounted to a crore and twenty-three lacs of rupees :—which through the avarice, stupidity and mismanagement of Ramdoolal's heirs has again dwindled into a few lacs. The genius of Ramdoolal could transmute dross into gold—his honesty enabled him to dictate to the money market. Whilst serving as a ship sircar, ample opportunities were placed in his way to make steadfast friends of the Captains and Supercargos of the vessels to which his duties daily carried him. His fine temper, his manly humility, his stern straightforwardness, gave him a position inconsistent indeed with his humble office. He had obtained the respect and confidence of all with whom he ever came into contact—and the means now at his disposal enabled him to enter into business relations with those whom he could formerly approach only as a servant.

The great American people had just then obtained their liberty. The democratical spirit which had successfully carried them through a most perilous war with the mother country, manifested itself, when the excitement of that war had ceased, in the enterprise by which obscure ship Captains and Mates rose to wealth and eminence. Ramdoolal may justly be said to be the pioneer of American commerce in Bengal. The American Union was finally established in 1783 in which year England acknowledged the independence of her colonies in the New World. About this time Ramdoolal exhibited the greatest activity and fascination in alluring the trade of the United States to the harbours of Bengal. He freely advanced money to American Captains, loaded their vessels with cargo judiciously selected, sold their imports for the highest profit. The gains from these transactions were so considerable that Ramdoolal rapidly rose to wealth.

On the other hand, the obscure Captains and Mates for whom he worked, for whom he selected the most profitable cargo, to whom he freely advanced money when they stood in need of it, retired to America wealthy men and became merchants in their turn. The bulk of American business thus passed through Ramdoolal's hands. He came to be quoted as an authority in American commercial circles. So great was the confidence which his constituents in the new hemisphere reposed on his ability and his integrity, that for the first time in the history of Indian commerce, the merchants of the United States dispensed with European Agents in Bengal altogether; transacting direct with a native house, sending ships to its consignment and drafts to its credit for purchase of Indian produce. The house established by Ramdoolal still flourishes amongst us, being carried on by the grandsons of the millionaire on the daughter's side, under the style of Ashootosh Deb and Nephews. The following well known native gentlemen of Calcutta are its surviving partners, *viz.* Baboos Sham Chand Mitter, Auncop Chand Mitter and Autool Chunder Mitter. The fame for honesty and capacity established by Ramdoolal is still maintained by this house, which continues to transact direct with the merchants of Boston, New York and Philadelphia, without the intervention of any English or American Agents. It is impossible within the brief limits to which I am required to confine myself, to enter into any lengthy details of the commerce which Ramdoolal's enterprise and high speculative genius attracted to these shores from the bosom of the Pacific Ocean. His mercantile correspondence is an example indeed to the rising generation. There were no crooked ways in his business—no hollows from which an ambush could be started. Downright opinions were given in his letters with the bluntness of a plain sincere man. The

extent of his American connection may be imagined from the array of merchants of whom he was the sole agent in Bengal. The list I subjoin is taken from the books of the period immediately following his death:

BOSTON HOUSES.

G. R. Minot, G. Warren, J. Young, J. S. Amory, T. Wigglesworth, J. T. Coleridge, H. Irving, J. J. Bowditch, B. Rich and Son, E. Rhodes, F. W. Everitt, W. Godard, Mackie and Coleridge, H. Lee, O. Godwin, Theuring and Perkins.

NEW YORK.

Messrs. Lennox & Son, G. S. Higginson, Messrs. C. & D. Skinner, Messrs. Singleton & Mezick, S. Austin junior, W. C. Appleton, E. B. Crocker, E. Davies, J. J. Dixwell, W. A. Brown, A. Baker junior, G. Brown, T. C. Bacon, M. Curtis, Baring Brothers.

PHILADELPHIA.

Messrs. Grant & Stone.

SALEM.

Pickering Dodge, W. Landor.

NEWBERRY PORT.

The Hon'ble E. S. Rant, J. H. Telcombe.

MARVELHEAD.

J. Hooper.

So deep was the reverence attached to the very name of Ramdoolal in America, that a ship owner called a vessel after him, which was sent to Ramdoolal's consignment three times during his life time. The name was doubtless conceived to impart luck; and the owner had little reason to regret the choice he had made if that was his motive.

Some of the principal American Merchants subscribed for a portrait of General Washington taken

from life a few years before the death of the American Patriot. This portrait, in 1801, or a little more than a year after General Washington's death, was presented to Ramdoolal as a mark of their esteem and affection. The portrait is a life size one, measuring nine feet by six; and it may still be seen in the office of Aushootosh Deb and Nephews where Ramdoolal's grandsons have carefully preserved it. Such a distinction was never before or afterwards conferred on a Bengalee by the merchants of America or any other continent. But Ramdoolal was a man for all ages and all climes; equally beloved by all classes for his many virtues, with a reputation that had not a stain upon it and the manners of one of nature's born aristocrats. It was not however to the American trade alone that the genius of the man was directed. Though he was the early cherisher of that trade, though through him the great American nation first learned to honor the Hindoo and to repose confidence in heathen probity—to treat with contempt, under the catholic influence of a wide democratical spirit, the calumny that falsehood, chicanery and deceit formed the heritage of the unchristianised Bengalee—still the large mind of Ramdoolal, the grasp of his great soul, was not limited merely to this one result. If America revered his name and built ships to commemorate it, England was no less an admirer of his sterling merits. Hand in hand with the American trade, Ramdoolal directed his energies to the expansion of the trade with Great Britain and China. Whilst acting as the sole agent of a host of American merchants, of the Phillipine Company, of several important houses in China—he found time to undertake the Banianship of Fairlie Fergusson and Co. then the largest English House in Calcutta. The transactions of that House would strike the merchant of the present day as mythical. If it shipped rice it was in lacs of bags—if it exported sugar it was in

quantities that looked almost like a monopoly—if the brokers of Fairlie Fergusson and Co. demanded an article in the Bazzars, not another House in Calcutta dared to purchase it. Ramdoolal had unlimited credit in every market. His word was as good as a bond on stamped paper. A nod from him could unsettle the money market. The great Houses of Palmer and Co., Alexander and Co., Mackintosh and Co.—Houses the business transacted by each one of which was fully equal to that of fifty mercantile Firms of these degenerate days, but over which the Firm of which Ramdoolal was banian towered like a giant amongst dwarfs—bowed reverently to his wisdom and thankfully acknowledged his advice. An aged European gentleman who saw Ramdoolal in his declining years and who was himself a clerk at the time in the firm of Mackintosh and Co. thus writes about the great Banian:—"I remember him as well as I could see him now coming into Mackintosh and Co's office. The partners would rise from their chairs and meet him." "Ramdoolal Dey," the same writer continues, "had not his equal as Banian, man of business or a kind liberal man. Although I knew him only for a short time, (a few years before he died) and I was a youngster at the time, he was willing to do for me any thing I asked him to do. In those days it was usual for young gentlemen to go to China with opium. My prospects were excellent, therefore my uncle Dr. Wallich, Superintendent of the Hon'ble Company's Botanical Garden, thought it not worth while for me to take advances from your grand-father." This readiness in Ramdoolal to trust young men whom he considered deserving of his confidence, to place them in positions from which they could serve both themselves and their patron, to assist them to carve their fortunes, made him the most popular native gentleman of his day. He shared this trait with many of the merchants of America. It

is said of Mr. Thomas Handasyd Perkins, the founder of the great American Asylum for deaf dumb and blind that goes under his name, that he was remarkable for his kindness "in promoting the success of others, particularly of young men engaging in voyages or other commercial enterprise." In Ramdoolal this desire was a habit. No prejudice of race restrained or weighted his hands. His heart was wide enough to include the universe in its sympathies. Talk of antagonism of race. Ramdoolal was a living refutation of that grim theory manufactured by a prurient imagination to distract and degenerate mankind. His behaviour disarmed malice, his principles appalled the guilty with their loftiness, his acts scarcely left him an enemy. When the patriot of St. Domingo, the Negro Napoleon as he was called, the good and the gallant Toussaint—whom the white Napoleon treacherously entrapped and then starved to death in the dismal dungeon of St. Joux—organized a new Government after the successful insurrection in that island which he had headed, history records that, with a soul which disdained to avow the petty jealousies of race, though victory was on his side, though arms were in his hands, he nominated the principal members of his administration out of the white population whom he had subdued. Here was an example from which prouder races may learn the precepts of a holy morality, the promptings of a divine duty. Men there are at the present moment—Christian men in India, filling important offices in the state, who are not ashamed to avow, privately in unofficial talk and publicly in official correspondence, that the Hindoo and the Christian, the black man and the white, the slave and the suzerain—should be invidiously separated. To these the spirit of the heathen Ramdoolal may cry fie!—and the welkin shall resound with the sonorous ring of that scathing monosyllable. For Ram-

doolal in scattering blessings around him did not limit himself to the pusillanimous groove of race. European and Hindoo alike shared in them,—and if I were permitted to insert herein an extract from the inventory of his estate very kindly shown to me, I could startle you with an array of English names, the owners of which received pecuniary assistance from him to the extent of 33 lacs of rupees, freely advanced on bonds which were never enforced and the bulk of which were never paid. The truly great feel a pride, a dignity in treating humanity as a whole,—in casting out from their minds the littlenesses which distract and disfigure less gifted men. It is the effect of our education, our habit, and a low mistaken patriotism, to depress and deprecate that with which we are not familiar,—that which we do not consider national. The ordinary man is incapable of spreading out his sympathies in a way which we are accustomed to regard as God-like. It is a misfortune and a misformation. He is a moral cripple entitled to the pity and the commiseration of the wise and the thoughtful. Men like Ramdoolal or the Negro Toussaint, are natural perfections, to be imitated, or at least venerated. They certainly are happier than other men,—nearer to a higher spiritual organization,—more capable of enjoying the smack of a good act than their fellows floundering in a mere animal system of ethics. They are for the universe and not for any little spot in the universe. The world is their home, creation their nation. They are the fabulous man whom the Scythian ambassador described to Alexander whose right hand touched the West and whose left hand touched the East, whose head penetrated into the North, and whose feet trampled the South, pole. The contemplation of such men elevates humanity from the dust to which its mortal frame is destined, carrying the mind to its invisible home amongst the

Gods, where strife and spite and pride are forbidden to ascend and enter.

I have traced Ramdoolal to the summit of his prosperity. The orphan boy whom his grand-father reared upon the fruits of the meanest form of beggary, is now the grandest native in the realm. His word unsettles the commerce of Bengal. Four ships, viz., the "Ramdoolal Dey," named after himself, the "Bemola" named after his eldest and most favourite daughter, the "David Clarke" named after one of the senior partners of the firm of Fairlie Fergusson & Co. of which he was Banian, and another, carried his goods to England, to America, to China and to Malta. His credit in the market was unlimited—his advice and assistance were eagerly sought by the most eminent merchants of the day. When, a few years after this, Palmer and Co., Alexander & Co., Mackintosh & Co., all failed during a severe commercial crisis, his estate suffered a loss of nearly 25 lacs of rupees without being at all affected by it. The *London Times* alluding to this loss described the sons of Ramdoolal as the Rothschilds of Bengal. Whatever Ramdoolal touched became gold. He seemed to hold in his hands the true philosopher's stone. At one time he bought a fabulous quantity of glass beads on which no merchant in Calcutta would have wasted a thought. A market for them sprung up however in Madras—and Ramdoolal obtained a fabulous profit. On another occasion, black pepper became a drug in the bazar. Some thousands of maunds of that article were thrown upon Ramdoolal's hands. He held them on manfully until a demand arose in a distant country—and he then sold the entire investment for four times its ordinary value. A very impressive anecdote exists in connection with this transaction. It shows the stuff of which the man was made, what a glorious principle of right governed his acts,

how the accumulation of vast wealth had not made him avaricious, what a sublime reverence for truth sublay his character, what ridiculous pedants are the men who describe the Hindoo as incomparably deceitful. Whilst Ramdoolal was still holding on his pepper; before even the rumour of a possible demand for it had reached him,—an English gentleman who had locked up a large capital in a similar investment, but who could not any longer keep his stock without disturbing other commercial arrangements, waited upon the millionaire, offering to bond the article as security for a loan which he solicited. Ramdoolal, not yet sure that the pepper would sell, but instantly perceiving that by purchasing the English gentleman's stock, he could command a monopoly of pepper in the market, declined to advance a loan, though he agreed to buy the article at a proper valuation. The European would not have hesitated had the offer come from any other man than Ramdoolal; but the fact of an offer of this kind from such a well informed and shrewd speculator, led him to suspect that the pepper market would soon look up. He asked for time to consider. In the meantime the demand for pepper came urgently to Calcutta and the brokers in the city who had faintly heard that Ramdoolal had secured a monopoly of the article, flew to him with terms that would give the millionaire a profit of four times the money he had invested on it. Ramdoolal struck a bargain without delay, including into it besides his own stock, the pepper belonging to the Englishman, who knew as yet nothing about the demand, and who still in perfect ignorance of it, called on Ramdoolal a short time after, unreservedly selling his stock at the old market rate. This sale was quite a legitimate one. Ramdoolal was not bound to impart to the European the special knowledge by which he had made his

enormous profit. The latter had sold in perfect good faith and without any trickery having been practised on him. He could have had no reason to complain if a few days later he had heard that Ramdoolal had realised a fortune by the transaction. The ups and downs of trade commercial people are always prepared for. Had the demand which Ramdoolal contracted to meet, from any cause died away, Ramdoolal would have suffered a ruinous loss. What then was the surprise of the European when, after closing the bargain with him,—after the papers of sale had been duly signed, Ramdoolal handed over to him four times the stipulated price. A fortune it was, amounting to several lacs of rupees. The European in his ignorant simplicity asked what the other money was for? for whom was it intended? had the shrewd Bengalee made an error in calculation? was he dreaming? Ramdoolal at once undeceived him. He disclosed the whole story of the case—he was too romantically honest to make money out of another person's misfortune. A hurricane of thanks was poured upon him by the needy gentleman; the fame of his integrity flew over the city and was wafted across the sea. Can any one wonder that such a man lived to be a merchant king,—to accumulate a crore and twenty-three lacs of rupees after spending like a prince! Compare the commercial morality of the present age, the Joint stock swindles of our time, with this more than Roman virtue, this blazing truth issuing from a heathen. There were giants indeed in those days! Ramdoolal drew around him—and he had the tact to find them out, native gentlemen endowed with a similar reverence for truth to himself. His chief assistant and right-hand man at Fairlie Fergusson & Co's, Cossynauth Ghose, had once purchased a Government lottery ticket. A prize of 50,000 rupees was declared upon it. Ramdoolal was the first to hear of this prize. He

hurried from the lottery office to communicate to his friend the news of his good fortune. As he entered the room in Fairlie Fergusson & Co's office where Cossynauth, surrounded by native mohurirs, was performing his work, he joyously announced that Cossynauth's ticket had just won a prize of 50,000 rupees. Congratulating his friend, he asked him how he intended to dispose of this money. That friend coolly replied that the money was not *all* his. Every one in the room stared at this answer. But Cossynauth fixing his large, lustrous eyes upon three of the mohurirs who sat next to him, declared that these had each a fourth share in the prize. The persons pointed out were amazed,—Ramdoolal was confounded. The mohurirs knew nothing about the lottery ticket. Cossynauth had purchased it himself and had paid for it ; but he had debited the men in his private account book with a fourth part each of the price of the ticket. The men were his debtors. They knew not until this moment that they were his debtors. Perhaps, if the lottery ticket had carried a blank instead of a prize, the debts would have been cancelled without their ever knowing that they were his debtors. Cossynauth had put in the names of the men in the simple, superstitious belief that if his luck was not sufficient, that of any one of these men may possibly secure a prize ; and now that a prize was within his grasp, he disdained to back out of his intention, however secretly formed or kept, though he lost about 40,000 rupees by his romantic folly as Ramdoolal characterised the affair—Ramdoolal who, good and great as he was himself, could not help feeling awed by the austere integrity of his friend. By such men was Ramdoolal constantly surrounded,—men whose long lives presented one unbroken picture of nobility of thought worked out by nobility of action. These were our forefathers, and how small and degenerate

we look beside them, with our ever-lasting tattle of principle and morality, yet perpetual struggle to over-reach our fellows !

Though Ramdoolal had now risen to the highest pinnacle of wealth, yet his habits were the simplest that can be imagined. A few months before the purchase of the wreck which laid the foundation of his stupendous fortune; whilst yet a junior ship Sircar, the senior Sircar above him, anticipating from present signs and symptoms the future of his young subordinate, proposed a match between him and his sister; a beautiful girl, the pride of the village in which she was born, Moolajore, not far from the spot on which I am now standing;—fair as the rose, with a heart fairer still if possible. Bengalees believe in the luck brought to their homes by their wives. A bride is not selected by a Hindoo before the marks about her have been curiously examined. The girl whose palms and the soles of whose feet are red, whose lips are of a vermillion color, whose forehead and mouth are small,—is a paragon, not of beauty only, but also of good fortune. The Goddess of luck is herself represented with these characteristic features. Ramdoolal's wife had these signs bounteously bestowed upon her. And when, a few months after her marriage, her husband earned a fortune by purchasing an abandoned wreck, the wise amongst her acquaintances extolled the veracity of the Shasters and presaged for her an extraordinary destiny. The virtues of Ramdoolal's wife developed with her husband's increasing wealth. People commenced to say openly that it was her luck that had made Ramdoolal so prosperous. If the husband was simply generous, the wife was wastefully liberal. Ramdoolal once purchased numerous bales of a peculiar kind of broad cloth, the inner and outer sides of which were of different colors. For the first time in the history of the English trade with Bengal,

this broad cloth had been imported. The price of the article was not to be sneezed at. Thirty rupees a yard was no inconsiderable value at a time when the specie circulation had not attained the gigantic proportions of our day. Ramdoolal held the article as a monopoly. The entire stock in the market had been soused upon by him. His brokers reported there was not another ell of the commodity to be obtained any where else. Satisfied that the monopoly was complete, he carefully stowed away the bales in the godowns of his own residence and awaited the day on which he should sell them at a price of his dictation. As he sat one winter morning, however, in the verandah of his house, he was surprised to observe one brahmin after another passing through the street below, enveloped in broad cloth sheets of the exact pattern of the article in his possession and of which he flattered himself he was holding a monopoly. His first act that day on reaching his office, was to call together his brokers, tax them with their neglect in obeying his positive instructions and to send them again on an exploring expedition into the market with rigid orders to buy up all the broad cloth of the peculiar pattern, for any price; for he was sure his monopoly was in danger, as he had that very day seen the identical stuff on the persons of a host of Brahmins as they passed in front of his house after their morning ablutions in the Ganges. In vain the search. After a weary day's toil the entire band of brokers returned with certain intelligence that not two inches of the article could be found in the Bazar; and had not been there during the last three months. But Ramdoolal could not disbelieve the evidence of his senses. He had seen the thing that very morning on numerous aged Brahmins—and if it had not come from the Bazar, it could not certainly have dropped down from the moon. Deeply revolving the mat-

ter in his mind, he returned home and proceeded to inspect his godown. There the truth revealed itself to him on the most cursory examination. His wife had burrowed into the merchant's den—and whilst the man was calculating rupees, annas and pie, the woman could contemplate only the comfort which one or two bales of that fine warm stuff would bring to the palsied limbs of the Brahmin shaking and shrinking beneath the cold December dew. Her soul of charity could not behold distress and the means of alleviating it without bringing the two face to face, and mitigating the suffering the sight of which so severely pained her gentle heart. Unknown to her husband—unknown to even her husband's servants, the heroic woman had pulled down the heavy bales of broad cloth, and, scissor in hand had made the necessary divisions in the pieces. Then summoning all the needy brahmins in her neighbourhood she had distributed the costly stuff—each sheet being worth 90 rupees according to the price actually paid by her husband—amongst hundreds. Ramdoolal silently observed the havoc made in his preserves. But he dared not say one word to his wife—worthy wife of a worthy man. His eyes were opened—and the succeeding morning he completed the good work thus begun without his knowledge, by distributing several pieces of the beautiful garment amongst his neighbours and friends.

At another time, Ramdoolal had purchased six hundred bags of the best refined sugar for a large sum. These had been similarly stored in his house in expectation of a fitting market. Ramdoolal's wife obtained the permission of the millionaire to have the *Poorans* daily read in her house, a few days after this transaction. The pious Hindoo woman, who is herself unable to read or write, considers it an act of the highest devotion to listen to the *Poorans*, or the great volume of the Hindoo shasters, as they are read

and expounded by a learned brahmin. The minutest incidents of Hindoo worship are thus impressed upon the minds of the ignorant. It is an act of religion fully equal in expense as well as its devotional effects to a poojah. The household God is brought in state into the compound and there placed on a silver throne, under a golden umbrella—a platform is erected on which a velvet bed and velvet covered pillows richly ornamented with gold, are spread. The reader of the *Poorans* is dressed in silken clothes, with rings and with neck chains;—many garlands of sweet scented flowers are wound round his head and his neck,—the sweet scented *chundun* covers his forehead and his cheeks. Thus bedecked, so soon as the heat of the meridian sun has subsided, day after day he takes his seat on the bed spread out for him on that raised platform—and with the open volume of the shasters before him, he proceeds to expound in popular Bengalee the stories of the Ramayan and the Mohavarut. A dense crowd of eager listeners consisting mainly of women and aged Brahmins, surrounds him. A good reader must be an inimitable actor. The voice, the gesture, the proud or piteous look of the characters whom he brings forward, must be represented with the truthfulness and reality of nature. At times his audience is convulsed with laughter—in another moment audible sobs proceed from the listeners who press closer and closer around him. When he describes the scene in which the five sons of Pandoo after having lost every inch of land at the gaming table, lose also their common wife—and the beautiful Drapodi is dragged into the divan of the ruthless Doorjadhon, an attempt being there made to forcibly reduce her to nudity and the Gods come to her rescue supplying her with endless garments as fast as those worn by her are taken away—the commotion in that female audience, the outbursts of indignation and grief,

the flush of a chaste shame, may be better imagined than described. These are the means at the disposal of the Hindoo woman for educating herself in lofty ideas of honor and of duty,—these are the opportunities by which she rears up the ideals for her imitation,—these are the fountains at which she drinks in the elixir of that pure, dazzling, heroic, morality which, in spite of harassing social institutions, makes her a pattern mother, pattern wife and pattern offspring. Can it be wondered that the Hindoo widow mounted in days gone by, and would still mount if the permission were given to her, the blazing pile of her dead husband, with a smile upon her lips and bedecked as a bride,—her husband's head upon her lap—unmoved and imperturbable, with the flames flashing and hissing around her soft sensitive form. The shasters prepare her at these graphic expositions of them for the dreadful sacrifice. She hears with a glow of feminine pride how Koontie and Madri the two wives of king Pandoo at the death of the king, each sought to be crowned with the halo of the suttee,—how their contention was at last decided by arbitration—and how blank and dismal was the look of Koonti when her rival was pronounced to be the fitter suttee.

Ramdoolal's wife gave one of these holy readings, as I have said, a short time after her husband had purchased and stocked his godowns with 600 bags of the finest sugar. For ninety days were the readings continued. Thousands of native women daily flocked to her house to listen. The fine spirit of courtesy by which the mistress of the house was governed, required, that this vast assemblage should daily be entertained with *sherbet*. The six hundred bags soon melted therefore under her hands, until, by the time the readings were finished, only forty bags remained of that large supply. Ramdoolal, little suspecting what was going on, so soon as the sugar market became favorable, effect-

ed a sale of the entire six hundred bags and sent a sircar to his house to cause them to be delivered to the purchaser.

What was his surprise when the servant returned with the information that the mistress of the house had already run through 560 bags of the valuable article. Ramdoolal had reason to be annoyed. The sale had been completed and he would be required to pay damages for nonfulfilment of his contract. Returning home that evening he went straight to his wife and with gloomy looks upbraided her for her extravagance. In the excitement of the moment he called her his angel of ill-luck. His wife listened. All the former reproach she could bear. But this last—the reproach of being her husband's angel of ill-luck,—she whose luck had raised that husband from the contemptible pay and prospects of a ship sircar to the proud position of a citizen king, the trusted Agent of scores of mercantile Houses in both hemispheres, the dictator of the Calcutta market,—went like a dagger to her heart. Her dark flashing eyes now pouring forth a hundred streams were for a moment fixed intently upon her husband, then slowly repeating his words, I your “angel of ill-luck,” she darted out of the room like Diana charged with light-headedness, and reaching her bed chamber bolted the door behind her. Ramdoolal stood petrified. During his long life of 73 years he had never lost his temper except on that eventful day. It is said of him that he knew not one single epithet of abuse. In a remarkably loose age when the passions of unlettered men had not become acquainted with the restraints of law or of etiquette, Ramdoolal was the perfection of gentility. The highest term of reproach with which he was familiar was the Bengalee word *mohapattur*, which literally translated means a mighty wight. When exceedingly annoyed with any

body, he put his hand to his nose and addressing a third party declared, that was not an ordinary man,—he was a *mohapattur*,—a mighty wight. That Ramdoolal should have thus forgotten himself before a wife whom he tenderly loved and almost adored, was not surprising; his reputation for truthfulness was jeopardised by his inability to meet the engagement he had made with the person who had purchased his stock of sugar. The loss in money was contemptible to a man of his enormous wealth. But the loss in reputation he felt too keenly not to be annoyed with the being through whom it was sustained. The tears, however, of his wife,—the manner in which she had looked at him,—the recollection that she had given away to the thirsty on the simple impulse of benevolence the article about which he had dared to reproach her, at once disarmed him of his passion. The enormity of his offence disclosed itself to him in the most hideous colors. He had not yet tasted food after his return from work; he had now neither hunger nor thirst. His whole soul was bent upon a reconciliation with the wife he had so deeply injured. Let those who call the Bengalee ungallant,—the oppressor of the sex,—contemplate the scene I am about to describe. Slowly Ramdoolal bent his steps in the direction his wife had taken. Finding the doors of her chamber closed, he knocked gently; sobs alone answered him from within. He called piteously,—imploringly. He confessed the enormity of his crime,—he called himself a coward and a fool. By a thousand endearing epithets he craved his lady's pardon;—mercy was accorded by heaven, and would a woman deny it? There he stood, in that outer room,—the great man humbled to the dust, moaning and sobbing himself as the moans and the sobs of his wife came piercingly upon his ears. At last the bruised heart of his spouse softened,—she cried herself to pity. Rising from the

bed on which she had flung herself she slowly drew back the bolts and her husband entered. Throwing himself at her feet he again and again craved forgiveness. Forgiveness was at last purchased by him for the worth in gold of a lac of rupees. This little fortune, Ramdoolal's wife at her death, left to her brother.

The character of the lady reminds us more of the heroine of a romance than a being of actual life. A thief was once seized in the act of stealing her jewels, she ordered the miscreant to be released, with the stolen property, declaring that his necessities must be very pressing indeed to incite him to so daring an act.

As an instance of the affection and reverence with which this excellent woman was regarded by the poor in her neighbourhood, whose smallest wants she was ever ready munificently to supply, I may mention, that, having at one time been attacked with a pain which seriously endangered her life, intimation was instantly sent to Ramdoolal at his office of the desperate condition of his wife. The deep business man left business to take care of itself and flew to his lady's bedside. As he entered the portals of his zenana he found ingress impracticable on account of the dense crowd of women who had hastened to see their patroness in what they conceived to be her last moments. With difficulty could these be thrust aside to make room for the anxious husband. The lady recovered however, to the inexpressible joy of her numerous friends and dependants and it was not until many years after her husband's death that she closed her spotless and benevolent life.

But Ramdoolal was not a monogamist. His first wife, the stories of whose life I have recorded above, gave birth to an only daughter. The child was born however without the organs of sight. Happily the torture of existence under such circumstances was brought

to a close in her seventh year. In the meantime Ramdoolal's wealth expanded and that vast accumulation threatened to go after his death to strangers. Still he hoped that his wife would eventually give him an heir. Vain hope! The Gods were worshipped and appealed to without any effect. A strict Hindoo, filled with the orthodox horror for *put*—the hell of the Hindoos which is declared by the shasters to yawn for the childless, for the man who leaves no issue after his death to offer up the funeral cake to his fourteen generations,—Ramdoolal was advised by the Brahmins who constantly surrounded him, to marry another wife. With hesitancy and by stealth was this marriage consummated,—unknown to his first wife, unsuspected even by her. But the news of such an important event in the life of a husband can not long be kept a secret from a spouse. It soon travelled into the ears of the rival, who repaired in gloomy dissatisfaction to her brother's house in Moolajore. Ramdoolal dared not bring this second wife to his home without softening and conciliating the first. The latter was at last found to be not unreasonable, though the woman within her, the natural feeling of her sex, had made her at first a rebel against her lord. She returned in the best of all possible humours,—returned to welcome the bride to her home, to carry in her arms the rival in the affections of her husband, the child, who, arrived at womanhood, gave that husband two boys and five girls as the heirs of his vast estate. Yet the lives of the two wives did not run smoothly. The jealousy natural to the sex embittered existences which had otherwise no ground for distraction. Outwardly the two ladies exhibited no signs of discord. The youngest never dared even to raise her veil before the eldest or to address her except in a low, subdued, respectful tone of voice. But there was gall and bitterness in their hearts. Ramdoolal invariably took his meals in the

apartments of his first wife and skulked into those of his second after the former had fallen sound asleep. He dared not speak to the latter in the presence of the former and all his children by his second wife were born in a separate house which belonged to that wife's relatives, for he would not wound the feelings of his first spouse by parading before her eyes the evidences of his secret love towards the second. It was not until the children grew up and were able to walk and to lisp that they were brought to his own mansion. And then, such was the caprice of a truly benevolent heart, their own mother was not more watchful and affectionate towards them than their step-mother. Yet this step-mother constantly laboured to estrange her husband from her rival by fasts and by poojahs ; and her weakness on this point was so extravagant that even the lads about her, whenever they wanted money, had only to present her with a cocoanut or other fruit curiously marked, declaring that it was a charm,—to extract from her foolish credulity whatever sums they required. Her rival having died before her, she anxiously enquired of the brahmins if there was any means available for preventing the former from joining her husband in heaven prior to her own death.

The habits of Ramdoolal it is impossible to find words to describe correctly. If I said merely that they were simple, no sufficient idea of his simplicity could be obtained from that naked statement. His food was of the coarsest description—consisting principally of rice and vegetables boiled therein, a little milk and one or two sweet meats. At night this was alternated by chuppaties. His dress was if possible plainer—a simple dhootie, a flannel banian with a long cloth dress thrown over it falling only a little below the waist, and a turban consisting only of a yard of cloth irregularly tied round his head, completed the attire

of a man at whose approach the first merchants of Calcutta rose from their seats in token of respect. When Ramdoolal had acquired a fortune which in our days would justify a man in driving his tandem and six helter skelter over the necks of his fellow men, he rode in a palkee. A friend advised him to set up a carriage. Ramdoolal replied that it was more humane to give employment to men than to feed dumb brutes. When at last, driven by the importunities of his friends, he actually did purchase a garrie and horse, he resolutely declined to let his coachman drive from the box, lest some poor fellow should be run over through his neglect. His syces led the horse on foot instead through the streets. The feeling for dumb animals that was in him, was of the intensest kind. On one occasion his nephew was causing a pair of horses to be castrated in the stables. Enquiring for him, some body mentioned what the young man was about. Ramdoolal was writing. He threw aside his pen and ran to the stables. The cruel act had already been perpetrated upon one of the animals. The other lay bound and struggling, ready for the operation. The place was deserted so soon as the old man's footsteps were heard. With his own hands he undid the fastenings of the poor beast, weeping bitterly all the time that his nephew should have become so hard-hearted, for his end was certain, he said, if he persevered in such enormities.

The charity of the man was munificent, but at the same time, most secret and unostentatious. A famine having broken out at Madras, a large and influential meeting consisting of the members of the Government and the principal merchants of the city was held in the Town Hall to raise subscriptions for the mitigation of the calamity. Ramdoolal paid down a lac of rupees in coin upon the spot and Kristo Panti offered to furnish rice for a like amount. The two con-

tributions sufficed to quench the calamity, and not another rupee it was deemed necessary to raise for the object. Ramdoolal gave 30,000 rupees towards the establishment of the Hindoo College. His private charities were extensive. Seventy rupees a day were set aside for the relief of distressed persons who applied to him at his office. Nearly four hundred of his poor neighbours received monthly supplies of rice and other articles of food at his expense, besides stipends in money to enable them to make their daily Bazar. A crowd of *Omedwars* always surrounded him. He carefully ascertained their necessities and sent them bank notes without any intimation as to the quarter from which these were forwarded, to enable them to support their families. Not unfrequently he would himself hand to one of these an envelope with a superscription, saying it was a letter from his home. If the man attempted to break the seal in his presence he gently reproved him. The letter might contain evil news, or news that might sensibly affect him. It was not wise to open it in the presence of strangers. "Take it to your lodgings," he would say, "and there carefully read its contents." The man took the unopened letter, and what would be his surprise when on breaking the seal he discovered inside a bank note of fifty or a hundred rupees according to the extent of his necessities. No man who prayed for relief at the hands of Ramdoolal ever returned disappointed. So delicate indeed were his sympathies, that he expressly retained a sircar for the sole duty of visiting his poor neighbours every day and bringing him news concerning their difficulties and their wants. Three native physicians were also kept in his pay, their instructions being, daily to visit the sick and administer medicine and medical comforts at Ramdoolal's expense. On Sundays, Ramdoolal with a long train of 50 or more native gentlemen who never forsook his side, himself visited his neigh-

bours, and it often happened that, after seeing the wealthy master, he entered the hovel of that master's sick servant, kindly enquiring how he did and what he wanted. These generous exhibitions of the most christian humility endeared him to all classes and made him the father of his neighbours. One day, whilst washing his face on an open terrace as was his wont, he observed that a wall only a foot and a half in breadth, was being erected by his friend and servant Cassinath Ghose to whom allusion has already been made, as the boundary of the latter's zenana. This wall was abutted by a tank which belonged to Ramdoolal. The millionaire at once saw the indiscretion of his friend. Such an erection would scarcely stand the onslaught of the first heavy shower of rain. The owner of the wall might hereafter be in possession of the means of building an upper story of which that wall would form a foundation wall. This clear foresight gave Ramdoolal no rest. He descended from the terrace from which he had made these observations and proceeded straight to the residence of his friend. Long and earnestly did he endeavour to persuade the latter out of his visible folly. But the means of the man were at the time not very large, and the plan suggested by Ramdoolal of sinking the foundation ten feet deep by six feet broad was too expensive to suit those means. Despairing of making his friend listen to reason, he ordered the workmen to pull down the wall and reconstruct it in the manner he wished it to be done. His friend was aghast. But Ramdoolal bade him make his mind easy, for he would pay for the alteration. The expense amounted to somewhere near five thousand rupees! At another time, whilst similarly employed on the same terrace, an idiot, Kassy Sircar, the name of whose father was also Ramdoolal Sircar, but who being an older inhabitant than the new Ramdoolal, the neighbours distinguished him by the prefix of the stale

Ramdoolal—thus accosted the millionaire :—“ Ramdoolal, ah ha Ramdoolal, you have made my father the stale Ramdoolal. You have earned wealth and reputation. Look here, what is this at my feet ? ” There was a dead pigeon lying in the street at that moment with myriads of ants devouring it. To this the idiot pointed. “ A dead pigeon, thou fool,” shouted one of Ramdoolal’s attendants. “ Silence slave,” returned the idiot, “ my question is not for thee.” Ramdoolal looked, and looked thoughtfully. Assuming his blandest smile, he said “ Kassy, what is it, what but a dead pigeon ? ” “ That pigeon dead, dead do you call it,” replied the fool, “ that pigeon which has given up its body to two lacs of hungry mouths,—that pigeon dead,—and is it you that are alive, washing your face on that snug terrace ? Does not that pigeon remind you of a duty ? ” Ramdoolal opened an asylum that very day, for the needy, in his villa at Belgetchia. Thousands daily obtained their food at that place at his expense and still obtain it. The asylum is open to all comers and to all castes. Rice and dall and ghee and potatoes and fire-wood with cooking pots are issued to whomsoever may want them. Thus the proud brahmin and the lowly chandal can alike partake of his bounty without violence to caste, for it is not cooked food that is distributed there as at other similar institutions. Upwards of 500 persons were daily fed besides at Ramdoolal’s own residence. If a beggar asked for a ration of rice at his door, his servants had orders to pour upon his rags as much as he could carry. There was no stint in the man. His charities were on a magnificent scale. When a person who had a daughter to marry or the *shrad* of a dead parent to celebrate, applied to Ramdoolal for aid, the sum usually paid to him was 500 rupees. One of his daughters was married to the son of a poor koolin. The bride on being taken to her husband’s house astonished her hus-

band's relatives by voluntarily undertaking the most menial offices of the household. Ramdoolal had educated his children to the greatest humility. The child refused to put on the golden ornaments given to her by her father until similar ornaments were bestowed upon the wives of her husband's brothers. Ramdoolal forthwith supplied them admiring the fine sensibility that dictated such a generous request.

The humility of Ramdoolal was of that touching, primeval, unearthly character, which strikes the beholder with awe. Pride was not in his composition, insult could not rouse in him the spirit of revenge. Universal peace,—forgiveness of injuries,—the rescue of the weak and the oppressed, were the guiding principles of his conduct. Though he spent three lacs of rupees on the marriage of each one of his sons, the only ostentation that he made was exhibited in the circumference and the solidity of his gifts. As much as a hundred rupees was the sum bestowed on every learned Brahmin of Nuddea whom he invited to his house on the occasion. The preparations for the feeding of the poor and the feasting of his guests were on a scale that might be now deemed fabulous. Fifty three casks of Ghee were consumed in the festivities. For a fortnight not a single neighbour of his purchased food. The piles of baskets in which the eatables were to be distributed, were so stupendous, that one could mount over them to the second story of the house. A sepoy guard had been hired by Ramdoolal's son-in-law to preserve order. It happened that the guard did not know the millionaire personally. Dressed as he was in the simplest of garments, a sepoy pushed him to the ground as he attempted to enter his own house after completing his survey of the preparations for the marriage. His durwans rushed upon the man to avenge the insult, Ramdoolal on regaining his feet threw him-

self between the combatants and sternly commanded peace. On another occasion, his eldest son, Aushootosh Deb, who was fond of fine society, of music and of merry making—held a dancing party in the room exactly over that in which Ramdoolal was accustomed to write his letters. The noise and the tramp of many feet distracted the old man. He sent for his son, and quietly told him that his house was the residence of a business man and not of an *omrah*. This same son, at another time, had made formidable preparations for an affray with Rajkissore Dutt the notorious forger of Government Promissory notes. The event occurred before Rajkissore had been discovered at his tricks and while he was yet accounted one of the richest men in Calcutta. Ramdoolal heard of these preparations and humbly waited upon Rajkissore with many apologies for his son's violent intentions. The quarrel was thus extinguished by Ramdoolal's humility. Again, one Cally Nauth Sandel, the son of a rich brahmin of Calcutta,—the type of a dissolute, vagabond scion of the aristocracy, surrounded always by the loosest and most desperate characters of the Bazars,—in a drunken frolic, excited by the wild fanaticism of the Hooly festival,—besmeared Ramdoolal's brother-in-law with the defacing red powder. The young man took up a handful of dust from the streets and threw it at his tormentor. This return for a disgusting liberty roused the indignation of the bravo. He caused Ramdoolal's brother-in-law and one or two others who were with the latter, to be seized and conveyed to his house. There, with closed doors he administered to the three the bastinado until the blood flowed from their mouths and nostrils. Satisfied at last, he thrust them into the streets. Ramdoolal heard, on his return home from business, of the outrage perpetrated on his relative. The father of Cally Sandel was his friend. With his dying breath he

had recommended his two sons to Ramdoolal's care. Here was a case which severely taxed his temper. The richest native of the time, he possessed the means of retaliating the outrage in the most formidable manner. But Ramdoolal by a heroic effort contained himself. Not so his sons. These with a large retinue of armed men lay in wait for the ruthless Cally Sandel. In the meantime, Muthoor Nauth Sandel the brother of Cally, had been advised by his English friends to wait upon Ramdoolal and humbly apologise to him for the conduct of Cally. Unquestionably the man would have been beaten to within an inch of his life had not Ramdoolal, apprised of his visit, himself gone forth to meet and welcome him. In the recesses of his sitting room the millionaire with folded hands and streaming eyes begged Muthoornauth to tell him whether he should be permitted to live in Calcutta or must he be driven by the outrages of his brother Cally to seek an asylum across the water. "Your father was my friend," he said, "I have never expressed towards you or your brother any other than my good will and affection, and here is my reward." At that time both Muthoornauth and Cally were residing in a house generously placed at their disposal by Ramdoolal, free of rent—without any limit even as to the period of its occupation. The tears of Ramdoolal, his deep, digging humility, sensibly affected Muthoornauth. The brahmin would have fallen at the feet of the sudra had not Ramdoolal prevented such a debasing act. The insult was thus most satisfactorily apologised for and Ramdoolal personally escorted again his guest through the belligerent bands whom his sons had assembled. When those sons signified their anger at this proceeding, at this generosity so ill-timed, Ramdoolal softened them with these memorable words, "My young friends, if the sacred bull devours a jewel,

would it be religious to rip open his belly in order to extract the trinket?" When however, a few months later, this same Cally Nauth Sandel, whose violent and aggressive nature defied the restraint of either fear or example, made a row with one of Ramdoolal's neighbours—a man whose temper was as soft as a woman's and whose heart was as pure as a moon beam,—the spirit of Ramdoolal exhibited a rancour against oppression which was terrible in its holy energy. We have seen how an injury to himself, how an outrage, gross and uncalled for, upon one of his nearest kinsmen,—the brother of his favorite wife,—he overlooked and condoned with the charity of a Christian and the complacency of a philosopher. But this outrage on his neighbour completely upset his temper. He determined to punish the scoundrel who, rioting in brute force, hesitated not to perpetrate acts which jeopardised the personal safety of every citizen. Moving the Magistracy with that power and effectiveness which his position and wealth at all times commanded, he procured an order for the expulsion of Cally Nauth Sandel from the limits of the city, and that atrocious ruffian accordingly ended his days in Bhowanipore.

Ramdoolal's wives, before he had attained to his enormous wealth, were in the habit of filling their pitchers with water according to the custom of those times, in a Tank in Goa Bagaun Street belonging to the Mullicks. He insisted on the practice being continued even after he had become wealthy. He was too humble himself not to be solicitous of preserving such an emblem of humility in his family. It was only when all his friends mutinied against this custom that he ordered it to be abandoned. When Ramdoolal sat down to his meals, he called all the children in the house to his side, also the domestic birds and beasts, that they might have their food

simultaneously with himself, and he distributed their rations with his own hands.

A superstitious respect for the Brahmin led to some of the finest and funniest passages in Ramdoolal's life. A Brahmin applicant for a place, who had found all other means of obtaining a situation in Ramdoolal's establishment ineffectual, adopted the extreme expedient of one day putting his shoulder to the banian's Palkee. The banian jumped out in a perfect fright and the brahmin was forthwith provided for. Another brahmin had for years paid his court to the great man but without getting even a sircarship. His ambition was limited only to a sircarship. But fortune seemed to spurn him. When American vessels came into port, the mohurir of Ramdoolal had orders to lay before his master a list of names from which the latter selected the extra sircars required for those vessels. The name of Ramessur Mockerjea, the *Omedwar* I allude to, was often put into that list, but as often scored through. At last the disappointed brahmin begged the mohurir to write the word "bull" against his name. Ramdoolal was again in the act of passing his pen through that name, when the strange word met his gaze. The *Omedwar* was peeping over the millionaire's shoulder. "Cut down the bull also Sir, you have so often cut down the brahmin that you need not hesitate over the beast." Ramdoolal smiled and gave the man the long coveted sircarship. One of the Roy Chowdries of Panihatty once sued Ramdoolal for a large sum of money in the Supreme Court. The suit was supported by forged documents and suborned witnesses. Ramdoolal was never in any body's debt. On the contrary the Roy Chowdry owed the merchant a considerable amount. The friends of Ramdoolal had retained counsel and were preparing to defend the suit. But when proofs of the forgery were

brought to the millionaire's notice, he peremptorily instructed his advocate to confess judgment, for he would not be the means, he said, of bringing a Brahmin to harm; thus preferring to give away 24,000 rupees in costs and principal, though not a single rupee was payable by him, to pressing a defence that might have ended in the arraignment of a Brahmin for forgery. The morality which dictated this step was doubtless a spurious one. But the sacrifice, and the motive, and the light of which Ramdoolal had the benefit, invest the deed with a charm not easy to be repelled. His hatred for lawsuits was so intense, that he voluntarily offered to adjust the differences of others at a great sacrifice of his time and not unfrequently of his money. Well knowing Ramdoolal's objection to give evidence in a court of justice, a gang of swindlers combined to lay him under contribution by first offering pretended disputes for his arbitration and then summoning him as a witness in the Small Cause Court. Ramdoolal readily paid the disputed amounts rather than appear at the witness box and touch the holy Ganges water. The game however became so frequent that his European friends seriously remonstrated with him on the unreasonableness of the prejudice which demanded such a heavy penalty. More through their importunity than from any reformed ideas of his own on the subject, he consented once for all to give evidence, and the act had the effect of ridding him for ever of the harpies who traded upon his simplicity.

The gratitude of Ramdoolal was ever munificently manifested. Whoever had shown the least pity or compassion towards him during his adversity, obtained returns at his hands when he was in a capacity to serve him, which no other man would have deemed it necessary to offer under the influence of a mere sentimentality. While yet a child he quarrelled with another

child—and a third child happened to take his side in the quarrel. This last enjoyed the bounty of Ramdoolal so long as he lived. His maternal grand-father was once put to great straits in making the customary presents to a near relative during the *Hooly* festival. Ramdoolal, then quite a boy, grieved sorely that he could not assist his grand-father in obtaining the necessary articles. He solicited every shop-keeper for credit, but without success—until one, more humane than hopeful, through sheer commiseration for the distracted youth, whose fine honest features were distorted by blank disappointment, relieved his want as an act of pure charity. Ramdoolal, when long subsequently he became opulent, sought out the sons of this humane friend, who had himself ceased to live, and settled on them a pension of Rs. 15 per month. The first European through whom he obtained a profit in business, was a Portuguese Captain named Hannah. All the enormous subsequent profits realised by Ramdoolal were credited to the lucky name of this gentleman in his accounts, so deep was his reverence for the memory of the man. And his active gratitude towards him was displayed by the handsome pensions which he bestowed upon Captain Hannah's widow and daughters. These often visited him at his house and were intimate with his own wife and daughters. But the most brilliant act of Ramdoolal's life—that which severely and expensively tested his grateful feelings,—was the rescue of a descendant of his patron Mudden Mohun Dutt from spiteful excommunication. Cally Persaud Dutt was an abandoned libertine. He indulged in forbidden meats and drinks, and in forbidden associations, without the pretence even of secrecy. He had a Mahomedan concubine at whose house he perpetrated every excess. His friends hitherto tolerated his misdeeds. But Cally Persaud in an evil hour quarrelled with a rich

relation about only a foot of land. Then a storm came dark and threateningly over his destiny—then his habits underwent chaste, orthodox enquiry and denunciation—then the friends and relatives who only yesterday had eaten at his hand discovered, that that hand belonged to a reprobate. Cally Persaud was put out of caste by his own kinsmen. Ramdoolal, the friend of the weak, the father of the oppressed, was outraged by the audacious indecency of the persons who, from feelings of the basest revenge, conspired to ruin one whose crimes were before most complacently endured by them. For the first time in his life, the millionaire put forth his pride. Slapping his box with his open palm he said—caste? here is caste! And at an expense of 3 lacs of rupees he raised that offspring of the house in which he had been fed and clothed and educated, that victim of family hate, to the position from which the richest men in Calcutta had combined to drag him. The history of this *Shumunny* or restoration to caste, is a wild and a lurid one—wild and lurid indeed to a generation which has lived to witness the apotheosis of Ram Gopal Ghose. In our tolerant and irresistible age, caste means only a simple refraining from the open embracement of Christianity. What is called the Hindoo community, is in truth a community of vast latitudinarian principles and habits. Beef is openly eaten by some of the foremost men of that community, yet they continue to preserve influence and have not lost respect. There is scarcely a rich Hindoo in Calcutta by whom the dainties of the Great Eastern Hotel are not patronised to an extent little inferior to that observable in English families. But in that dreary period of Bengalee progress, when the metropolis and its suburbs were divided between the partisans of Cally Persaud Dutt and the opponents of Cally Persaud Dutt, the most appalling fanaticism prevailed on the subject of caste. The

Rajahs of *Shovah Bazar*, still known as the defenders of the Hindoo faith—the ancestors of the late Rajah Radhakant—threw the whole weight of their authority into the scale against Cally Persaud. Thus the *Gooshtepodhs* with their overpowering influence in Hindoo society, an influence acquired by unlimited gifts to the brahmins and maintained by the same extravagant waste of money, were arrayed against the man whom Ramdoolal befriended and sought to re-establish. Nothing daunted by the formidable difficulties in his way,—inspired only by the severest gratitude—heedless of expense—Ramdoolal commenced canvassing on behalf of the fallen man. One by one the principal *koolins* succumbed to his gold. He had slapped his cash box with no vain vaunt about its efficacy. Hundreds of the highest brahmins and the most reputable *kyests* deserted to his cause. It became a point of no small anxiety to him to secure a kinsman of the haughty *Gooshtepodhs* themselves. A bribe of 1200 rupees soon brought a renegade to his standard from that proud house. The Rajahs surrounded their traitrous relative with true oriental jealousy. A guard of sentries was set over him—his every movement was closely watched. The Hindoo of the past century put forth in a game of caste, the same resources of wit and contrivance which were exhibited by English candidates for Parliamentary election about the same time. The man so vigorously and rigourously beset by sentries and spies, at last outwitted his friends and became a guest of Ramdoolal, who himself put him under still greater surveillance from the fear that he may change his mind or be pounced upon by the emissaries of the Rajahs and carried off by main force.

In the meantime great preparations were being made for the approaching feast—a feast at which Cally Persaud was to preside,—which was to form at

once the means and the proof of his return to caste. Money flowed like water from Ramdoolal's purse. The gifts to the Nuddea Pundits and the presents to the *Koolins* consumed more than two lacs of rupees. No *shumunny* was so costly or so successful. But Ramdoolal had an enemy in his own camp. His son-in-law, Radhakissen Mitter, was from the first opposed to these proceedings. The young man was a first class *Koolin* himself and he shuddered to contemplate the results that might follow the miscarriage of Ramdoolal's grand idea. Born of parents wretchedly poor, the soul of Radhakissen was as small as his circumstances were pitiful. His *Koolinism* was the only bait that had attracted Ramdoolal to the lad. The lad, though not ugly, was ungainly. His hair was red and his features were gross. He had not received even an ordinary education. Yet Ramdoolal was anxious to wed his eldest and most favorite daughter,—a daughter in whose name he had built a ship,—to this son of a *Koolin*. That daughter refused however to marry the bridegroom thus selected for her. She had seen the boy herself,—she loathed him with the absurd hate of a child. On the night on which the marriage was consummated, the bride screamed, and the bride writhed on her seat whilst being conveyed to the altar. So violent indeed was her conduct, that Ramdoolal was compelled to soften her in order that the marriage rites may be proceeded with, by pouring a handful of gold mohurs into her lap. Grown to manhood, Radhakissen's mind developed itself into the bitterest malice against every good man and every good act. He endeavoured to sow dissensions between his father-in-law and that father-in-law's dearest friends. Ramdoolal was too shrewd not to be able to fathom his motives. He understood his son-in-law thoroughly. But he could not bring himself actively to hate the husband of his most favorite daughter.

Radhakissen, on the day of the feast which was to crown with success the efforts of Ramdoolal to restore Cally Persaud Dutt to caste, furiously remonstrated with his father-in-law, on the course he was pursuing. Failing to make any impression upon him, he silently locked the door upon him, and when the guests in thousands assembled they in vain looked out for their leader. Suspecting a trick, Cossy Nauth Ghose, who had himself spent 30,000 rupees in aid of this *shumunnoy*,—who warmly seconded Ramdoolal's effort to rescue a fallen man from infamy—whose big heart deeply sympathised with every movement of his generous friend, seeking for him every where, at last discovered that he was a prisoner in his own house. One kick sufficed to burst open the door which confined him and the next moment the two enthusiasts were in the midst of the assembled brahmins and *Koolins*. Never was such a procession seen before in Calcutta. The van had reached Cally Persaud Dutt's house at Nimtollah whilst the rear still rested in front of Ramdoolal's house at Simla. For more than a mile the streets were filled with a dense crowd—the house tops were covered with spectators. The famous *Shaborno Chowdries* of Burisha, those brahmins amongst brahmins, choked up the thoroughfares with the lines of keranchies in which they came *en masse* to assist at the good act. Ramdoolal's triumph was brilliant and complete. Who dared tell that day, in the presence of that gorgeous assembly, that Cally Persaud Dutt was an outcaste, or that caste did not lie a captive in Ramdoolal's box?

The sons of Ramdoolal long continued to take care of the relatives of Cally Persaud Dutt after Ramdoolal's death. Very handsome pensions were settled upon them. After the death of Ramdoolal's sons these continued to be paid by the grandsons of

Ramdoolal on the daughter's side, Baboo Doyal Chand Mitter and his brothers. The pensions have only recently been stopped. They were withdrawn from the date in fact on which a member of the pensioned family gave his daughter in marriage to the late Ramgopal Ghose and thus again incurred the discountenance of the orthodox Hindoos of Calcutta.

The fame of this *Shumunnoy* eclipsed that of every previous performance of the kind. Even the Rajah of Nuddea had failed, in spite of his vast hereditary influence, to achieve a similar feat. Three thousand native gentlemen formed the procession, one thousand large umbrellas protected them from the sun. The city resounded with the din of gong and shell. The memory of the display awakens the strongest emotions still in the surviving witnesses. How few alas are these surviving witnesses! The principal actors have long disappeared in the valley of death, but the odour of a singular act of human gratitude survives to shed a halo over humanity and arm and strengthen it in every noble resolve. It was not the pride of Ramdoolal that sought its pabulum in these expensive proceedings. Pride was not in his composition. He despised display. But the very element of the man was a munificent charity. It was not merely to his own castemen that he was humble and generous. The lowest gradations of society shared his sympathy and his bounty in an equal degree. Amongst a nation which is accustomed to regard even the polished and enlightened Englishman as a *melecha*, the position of the *mekter*—the man whose occupation lies wholly amongst privies and cess pools, may be easily conceived. The *mekter* is an untouchable being—his very shadow pollutes and contaminates. But though Ramdoolal was a strict Hindoo and therefore filled with the most orthodox horror for a *mekter*, the innate charity of his soul led him to the humble dwelling of his

own *mehter*, Goura—to personally superintend his *shrad* or funeral ceremonies. To meet the expenses of this *shrad* Ramdoolal had paid a thousand rupees to Goura's son. Goura had once accompanied Ramdoolal's wife to Orissa to visit the holy temple of Jugunnath. There, caste is laid aside by the pilgrims, the highest and the lowest meeting each other at the shrine of the God upon equal terms. The lady of the millionaire and her sweeper, so beautiful is the Hindoo system, were there like mother and son. So earnest is the piety of the Hindoo woman, that the prejudice of a life time, yea, the inherited prejudice of generations, melts like snow beneath the sun in the presence of that holy temple. The *mehter* thus accosted his mistress—"Mother, my destiny in this life is the meanest that can be imagined; I have slaved for you in the most revolting occupation and will still slave for you and not dare to approach you so soon as I leave this sanctified spot. Allow me to claim the privilege of this place, and with my fingers often dirtied in your service, to drop the sanctified rice into your mouth." An English lady under the circumstances would have frowned upon the man for his impudence and screamed aloud to her husband to horse-whip him. But the devout Hindoo woman smilingly opened her mouth and swallowed without a twinge the consecrated food thus offered by a pariah.

The humane and generous feeling which governed Ramdoolal in his treatment of the poor was vividly expressed when a zemindary which had been mortgaged to him by the Mullicks, was thrown upon his hands by the inability of the mortgagers to redeem the pledge. Then as now, most zemindars acquired their substance, their means of luxury and display, by squeezing the ryut. The Naib of Ramdoolal, after exhausting every expedient of harassment and torture on some ryuts

who absolutely could not pay their rents, or rather the cesses above their rents which were demanded from them, sent a whole gang of these squalid, wretched creatures, to the zemindar's house, to undergo still greater rigour. The very appearance of the poor wretches, their lean and haggard looks, their scanty clothing, their blood shot eyes, sent a thrill of horror through Ramdoolal's heart. He ordered his dewan to issue new clothes to the men at once, to feed them plentifully, to treat them with the utmost indulgence. In the meantime the millionaire sent for the brokers who usually negotiated the sale of zemindaries. Before another sun had set his zemindary was sold at a considerable loss, and then only Ramdoolal found rest. He vowed never more to have any thing to do with a zemindary. He enjoined his children on their oaths never to purchase zemindaries. The prescience which dictated this injunction will be admired when the reader is informed, that one zemindary retained in mortgage by Ramdoolal's sons—the Narajole zemindary in Midnapore—sufficed to bring ruin upon the splendid fortune which Ramdoolal left to them. This stupendous fortune was the result of honest enterprise and not inhuman blood-sucking. Its founder knew how to take advantage of the fluctuations of the market and not the weakness of the ryut. The transactions of the Houses with which Ramdoolal was connected as banian, were so gigantic, that a *dustoorie* of only two pice the rupee brought him a fabulous income. There existed then an honorable trust between the English merchant and his native coadjutor. The Banian was responsible for the quality of the goods which he purchased for the firm which employed him. The European as well as the native had an interest in buying at the cheapest market; for, the gains of both were proportioned to the intelligence and the pluck with which the bargains were made. What a contrast

to this is presented in our own days. The Banian now is a salaried servant—a person who commands the esteem of neither his employer nor the Mohajun. He is taken from the ranks. Substance he has none. The salary he draws may be ample, but the temptation to make extravagant gains by colluding with the Bazar, are in many cases almost overwhelming. The merchant does a wrong to his constituent by taking the *dustoorie* himself and employing a Banian on a small fixed salary, for *dustoorie* is an excess over the commission which alone the constituent has agreed to pay. The banian learns a lesson from his master and not unfrequently conspires with the Bazar to make up for lost *dustoorie*. Thus commerce suffers severely through a system which, when not conscientiously worked, is a huge abuse. The confidence of former times has disappeared, and the Banian is now a mere head sircar without position or influence. All interests have thus been ruined by the change. Ramdoolal would have disdained to be a banian on such terms. There was too strong a love of truth in the man to have allowed him to accept a dubious place in the world of commerce—a world which his foresight regulated—at least in Calcutta—in which he had won a fortune not only for himself but also for those who put their trust in his integrity, his intelligence and his nerve. What paid Banian of to-day, for instance, would pass unscathed through a trial of credit such as that from which Ramdoolal once issued grand and refulgent to the confusion of the men who had conspired to test his solvency? It was the custom of Ramdoolal to issue cheques for payment every day to the extent of nearly three lacs of rupees, on a native Banking House in Burra Bazar with which he had an account. The Mohajuns to whom these cheques were granted were once seized with a curiosity to ascertain the actual resources of the millionaire—to find out in fact

whether he lived upon the mere froth of credit or the substantial support of an unlimited cash reserve. They agreed unanimously to allow all their cheques to accumulate for the period of a week, so that the demand and strain upon Ramdoolal's Banker might on one day be overwhelming. Ramdoolal was duly apprised however of the combination that had been formed, and he took early precautions to frustrate it. He massed upwards of 25 lacs of rupees in the chests of his Bankers and made arrangements for supplying them with any further sum that might be needed for the sustainment of his own and their reputation for wealth. At the end of a week the entire body of Mohajuns, as previously concerted, thronged the *guddee* of Ramdoolal's Bankers and demanded payment of the cheques which they presented. What was their surprise and their shame when 25 lacs of rupees were spread before their eyes from which each claim was promptly satisfied. What banian of our day would be equal to such a feat! Beside such a man how mean and contemptible looks the salaried banian whose income is inferior even to that enjoyed by Ramdoolal's Sirdar bearer.

The monthly expenses of Ramdoolal in salaries of Establishments, pensions, &c. amounted to Rs. 15,000. Whatever he did was on a magnificent scale. Orthodoxy demanded that he should build thirteen temples to Shiva in Benares, and he built and consecrated them through his eldest son Ashootosh Deb, being himself too busy to waste time in such mummeries—at an expense of two lacs and twenty two thousand rupees. The distribution of largess to beggars in the holy city on that occasion occupied five days. The millionaire's wife was weighed on the same occasion with gold and precious stones valued at a lac of rupees and the whole of that little fortune was divided amongst the learned Pundits of Benares.

Of Ramdoolal's habits of industry it is unnecessary at this late hour to give you any detailed account. One trait of the man will suffice to show the stuff of which he was made. I have said before, Ramdoolal could speak English fluently, but he could not write the language from a defect of spelling. At an advanced age, immersed in business, and distracted by a thousand cares, he could hardly be expected to re-commence his English education. But his fruitful mind sought to make up for this deficiency by a wonderful expedient. He wrote English letters in the Bengali character—a reversal, in fact, and contrary adaptation, of the Romanizing method,—and his clerks copied in English these curious drafts. Till midnight did he sit up writing his correspondence in this singular way, elaborate and extraordinary. Ramdoolal also kept a diary which unfortunately I have not been able to procure.

The first onslaught of the disease which finally extinguished so valuable a life, was made when Ramdoolal was in his 69th year. Paralysis overtook him suddenly whilst he was writing. He lay prostrate upon the ground—his voice failed him—servants and friends rushed in crowds to the place where he lay, gasping and helpless—the ladies of the zenana screamed—there was dismay on every face, for the great and good man was apparently in his death struggle. Intimation about his condition was instantly despatched to Messrs. Clarke and Melville the partners of Fairlie Fergusson & Co., whilst, by the advice of the native physicians, he was removed in-state to the banks of the Ganges. But Ramdoolal was not wholly insensible. He held the keys of his iron safes in his hand and when his son-in-law, Radha Kissen, offered to take them, he clutched them more firmly, awaiting the approach of his sons Ashootosh and Promothonath into whose hands only he abandoned

them. In the meantime Messrs. Clarke and Melville accompanied by Dr. Nicholson arrived at the bed-side of the dying millionaire. After having attentively examined the case, the Doctor drew from his pocket a small phial from which he let fall a single drop of its contents on the neck of Ramdoolal. The effect was miraculous. A large blister immediately formed and as immediately burst. The man who only a moment before was to all appearance dying, now sat bolt upright. He had regained his voice and had become thoroughly restored to health. The fame of this cure gave Dr. Nicholson a hold upon the esteem and the reverence of the Hindoo community which lasted throughout the long life of that eminent physician.

But though Ramdoolal was thus rescued from the jaws of death, his constitution became completely shattered. In two years he was again carried to the banks of the Ganges to die; and again his friends rejoiced in his recovery. At last, on the 1st of April 1825, after having completed his 73rd year, this good and benevolent Hindoo—this child not merely of fortune but of virtue, this father of the poor and friend of the suffering, amidst the lamentations of all classes of men, gave up his soul to heaven. Two sons, Ashootosh Deb, and Promothonath Deb, a grandson then quite an infant, Grish Chunder Deb, and five daughters, were left to perform Ramdoolal's *shrad* or funeral obsequies. The Brahmin and the beggar overflowed in Calcutta at this solemn ceremony. To the former, gold and silver and elephants and horses and budgrows and boats and carriages and palanqueens were given away with princely munificence; to the latter, upwards of three lacs of rupees were distributed. On no one was less than a rupee bestowed, and if a beggar woman was found to be *enceinte* a rupee was given to her and another to the child in her womb. Did a beggar bring

a bird in his hand, the bird obtained its alms equally with its master. The entire expense of this *shrad* amounted to nearly five lacs of rupees.

There is a moral in the life of Ramdoolal for the young as well as the aged, for the Hindoo as well as the Christian, for the rich man as well as the pauper. The torch of truth flickers not at the severest blast. There is an aristocracy which is not born but may be made. There is a heaven which the common mind can manufacture with help from above it may be, but not without righteousness from below.

3

TWO LETTERS

ON SOME RECENT PROCEEDINGS OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT.

BY

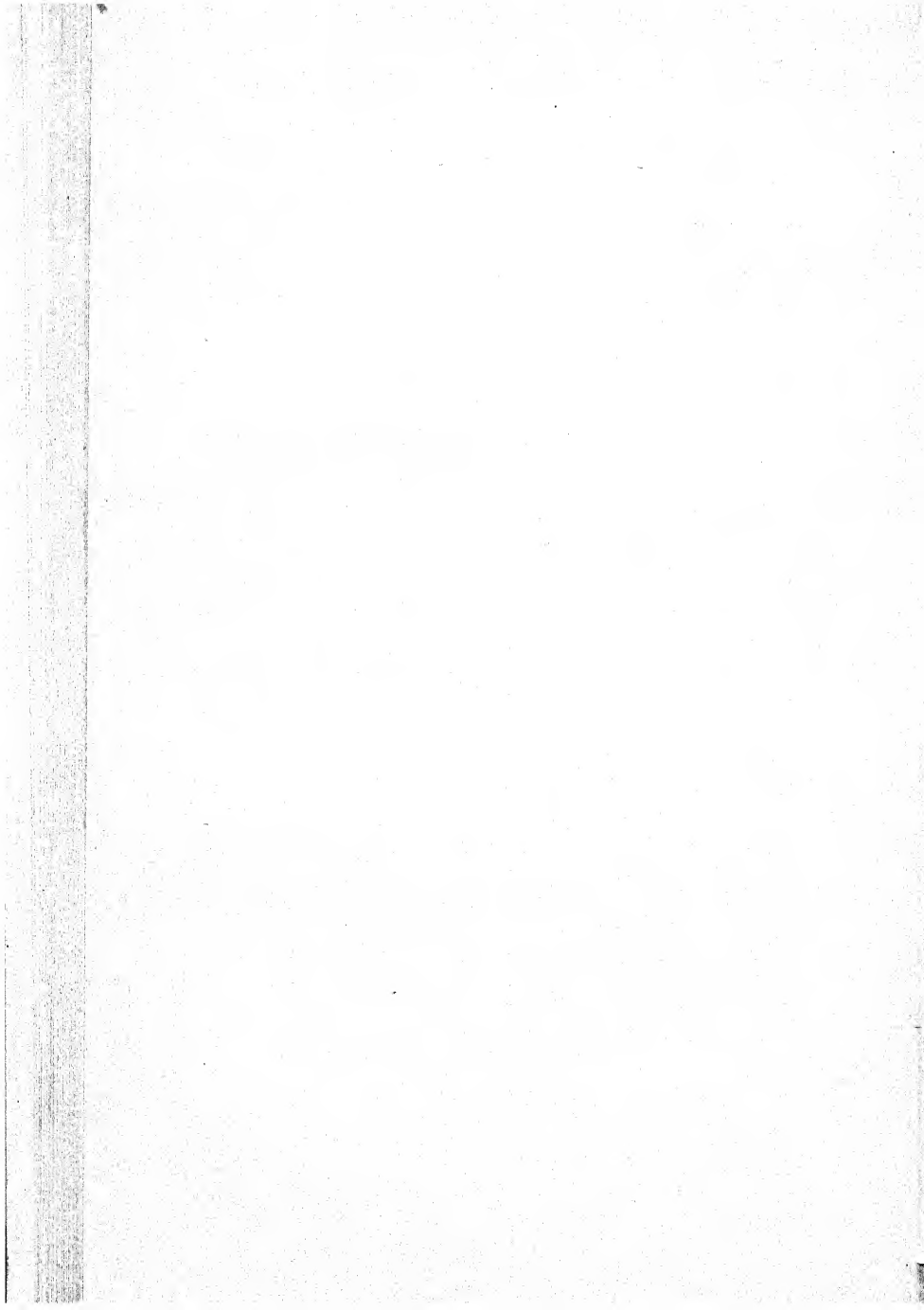
T. DUNBAR INGRAM, LL.B.,

Of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister-at-law; Advocate of the High Court, Calcutta.

LONDON:

WILLIAMS AND NORGATE.

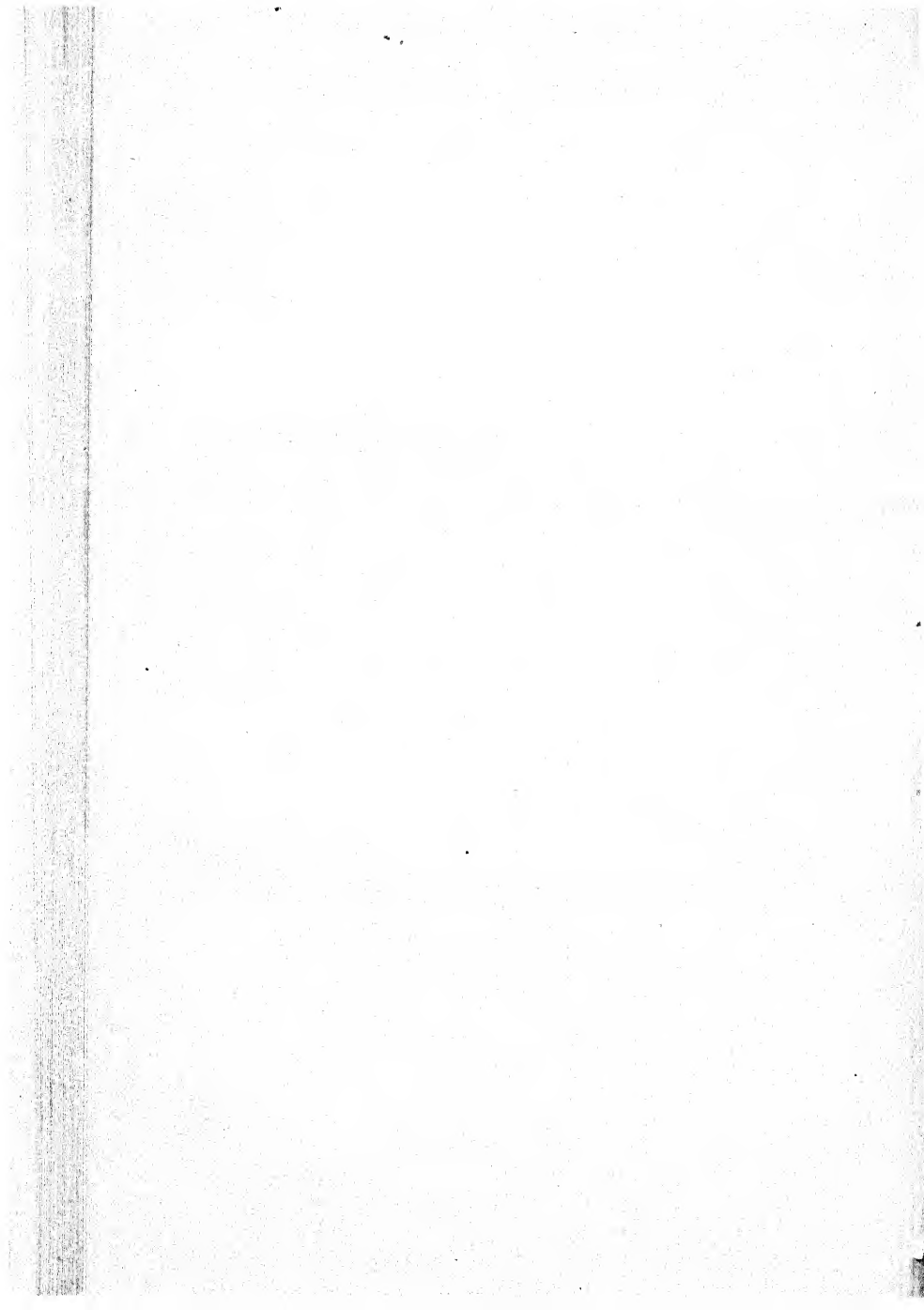
1871.



PREFATORY NOTE.

THE following Letters were addressed to the Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Copies of them were distributed, early in the present year, amongst persons in England known to be interested in questions relating to India. They are now published, with a few alterations in the form of expression, but with no substantial change.

The author, as Counsel for Ameer Khan and Hashmadad Khan, has had personal knowledge of the transactions which are the subject of the first Letter; but the statements he has made are all founded on public documents. He has never acted in any way for the Rajah of Shooshing.



LETTER I.

29, Theatre-road, Calcutta,
25th December, 1870.

SIR,

In your issue* of the 5th August, 1870, speaking of India, you say: "From one end to the other of that great Confederate Continent, the *Pax Britannica* now reigns. The corresponding change is from depths of poverty and misery, hardly touched even in the miserable and poverty-stricken East, to wealth, comfort, and progress of intelligence, such as the second-class European States might envy, and to a rapidity in the pace of improvement such as States even of the first class are scarcely rivalling. India is better governed than Turkey, Greece, or even the Danubian States, than Spain, or any South American State except Brazil."

You, sir, will admit that these second-rate States to which you refer, attempt at least to perform the primary duties of government, and that they do not wilfully or needlessly interfere with the security of the persons or property of their subjects. If they err, their errors must be attributed to their imperfect development, and to the difficulties of their position. They have no model government before their eyes, imitation of which is necessarily forced upon them, whereby to direct their steps and regulate their conduct. But the Indian Government is placed in a very different situation. It exercises a subordinate and not a paramount authority. It has constantly before it a model and example in the Home Government which

* See Prefatory Note.

gave it birth, and delegated to it the only authority which it possesses. If it neglects that example, and violates the precepts and traditions of English policy, its errors must be judged in a very different spirit from that in which we examine the conduct of less favoured States. Every departure from that policy must be justified, every variation must be explained. Nor can an arbitrary, self-willed, and fluctuating discretion, which is unknown to the principal Government, be allowed to the subordinate body.

When I speak of the conduct of the Indian Government, I am not now calling attention to the general melancholy circumstances of our Indian Empire at the present juncture, though those circumstances are as unintelligible to us here as they are deplorable. We cannot reconcile the easy position which this Government occupies, when compared with other Governments, with the heavy pressure under which its subjects labour. The Indian Government is free from many causes of expenditure which exhaust the resources of other nations. It possesses an elastic and increasing income of fifty millions; it maintains no diplomatic servants abroad; has not a single ship in commission; makes no provision for its poor; and expends but an inconsiderable fraction of its revenue on the education of the people. Notwithstanding this freedom from embarrassment, the present prospect is far from being a pleasant one; our finances confused even beyond former experience; trade and commerce seriously depressed; a war tax of $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the pound imposed without necessity, and exacted with a rigour amounting to universal oppression; dissatisfaction among the natives which, if neglected, may develop into disaffection; and, consequent on this, an increasing anxiety on the part of the English, manifested by occasional panics, such as that which lately occurred at Allahabad. The general state of India, however, will be best investigated by a Commission authorized to inquire and examine into every department of

the State, and before which every officer of the Government may be called. It would be obviously impossible for any private individual to collect trustworthy evidence on such a range of matters. It may be, too, that the existing Government of India is not responsible for the present state of the country, and that the faults and errors of its rule may have been inherited from its predecessors.

But, unhappily, there are serious charges which may be brought against the present Government of India, and which that Government cannot attribute to a traditional system or policy. These charges are specific, both in their details and in the persons to whom they relate. They are supported by evidence which is within the reach of every citizen, and cannot be questioned or gainsaid, for their proofs are to be found in the records of our tribunals, in the Government Gazettes, and in the Acts of the Indian Legislature. These specific charges are : (1.) That Lord Mayo and his Council have destroyed all personal liberty throughout the whole of India, without distinction of blood, language, or nationality. (2.) That the same persons have, in violation of British faith pledged to the Zemindars of India, seriously weakened the security of landed property wherever the Perpetual Settlement prevails.

Whilst I write, at this season of general hope and joy, there are upwards of sixty Mahomedan political prisoners languishing in the jails of Bengal and the north-west provinces. Against these men no charge has ever been preferred, nor have they been produced before a committing magistrate. They were first arrested and are now detained in prison at the mere suspicion of Lord Mayo and his Council—that Council, a member of which not a month ago took occasion to declare publicly, in its presence and in that of Lord Mayo, that the Mahomedans of India were loyal subjects.

Numbers distract the mind and dissipate the attention. I will take the case of one of these prisoners and hold it up, with

all its details, to the public opinion of a free and intelligent community. One example will show more clearly than all the declamation in the world what our Indian rulers are capable of, when they do not expect their conduct to be scrutinized too closely, and whether you, sir, are justified in saying that India is better governed than the second-rate States of Europe.

Previously to the month of July, 1869, there resided in Calcutta a Mahomedan of influence and respectability called Ameer Khan. This gentleman had been settled there for many years, and during that period had carried on an extensive business as a hide and grain merchant, and was well known to many of the leading English and native firms in that town. He had been successful in life, had attained great wealth, and at the time of his arrest was of the ripe age of seventy-five years. Among the English community, Ameer Khan bore a high character for commercial integrity; among his own, for that quality and unostentatious charity. Though a strict Mahomedan, he was not a fanatic, and allowed himself the daily use of those innocent luxuries, such as tobacco, which are strictly forbidden by the more rigorous reformers of the Wahabee denomination. Being a member of the Soonee sect, which is the orthodox sect of Mahomedans in India, as in Turkey, he did not deny himself those harmless gratifications which his age and habits required, and which his religion does not consider unlawful. The place in which he lived was under the protection of the Common Law of England. The English Constitutional Law has always prevailed in Calcutta, and the life and liberty of the subject are there secured by the same laws and statutes, from Magna Charta downwards, which are in force in England. It is beyond all doubt, that every inhabitant of Calcutta is entitled to his writ of Habeas Corpus; a decision of the Privy Council renders it doubtful whether a resident in the provinces, that is, without the jurisdiction of the High Court in Calcutta, is so entitled.

On the 10th of July, 1869, now eighteen months ago, Ameer Khan was arrested in his own house at Calcutta, at 1 o'clock, p.m., by the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mr. Birch, who was then acting merely on the verbal authority of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. On being arrested, Ameer Khan inquired as to the cause of his arrest and asked to see the warrant. Mr. Birch replied that he did not know the cause, but that he took him into custody "by order of the Queen." Mr. Birch, without allowing him time to make any preparation, immediately removed him to a railway station in a suburb of Calcutta, but outside the jurisdiction of the High Court. Here Ameer Khan was kept in close confinement and strictly guarded until 5 o'clock in the evening, when he was taken to the jail at Gya, a distance from Calcutta of 290 miles. There was no reason whatever for the rapid hurrying of the prisoner out of Calcutta, as the first train by which he could have been removed did not start till 5 o'clock. It was done merely to prevent his having any communication with his solicitors. There is, too, a large and commodious jail in the town of Calcutta, to which he might have been taken instead of being confined in a remote prison.

On Ameer Khan's removal from his own house, his friends at once communicated with his legal advisers. These gentlemen went to the railway station, and demanded from the inspector who had charge of the prisoner, inspection of the warrant under which he detained their client. The inspector said that he had no warrant, and that he was acting on instructions from Mr. Birch. Thereupon they returned to Mr. Birch's office in Calcutta, and asked that gentleman to allow Ameer Khan to be bailed, offering at the same time bail to the amount of £10,000. Mr. Birch was good enough to lay this proposal the same day before the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, who at once positively refused to accept any bail.

On his arrival at Gya, Ameer Khan was thrown into the

common jail there, and was confined in a room three parts filled with coils of rope, and used as a store room. During his imprisonment at this place he was subjected to prison discipline and prison diet. An armed guard of Hindoos, he himself being a Mahomedan, was kept night and day in the same room with him, so that he was denied even the privacy which common decency requires. No servants were allowed to attend on him, and his meat had to be cooked in his own room. He had neither bed nor bed clothes, and the use of his hookah was refused him. Nor was he allowed to see his family or manager except on two occasions, and these two interviews took place in the presence of a magistrate, and were only granted on the express condition of that officer being present. On one of these occasions the doctor of the jail said that the place was totally unfit for the confinement of the prisoner, and that he had so reported to the Bengal Government. These facts cannot be questioned; they appear upon the uncontradicted affidavits put in on behalf of Ameer Khan during the application for a Habeas Corpus; they also appear in a petition of his put in at the same time, and relied on by the Government advocate, Mr. Graham. We shall shortly see that his treatment was not only oppressive, but entirely illegal, and directly contrary to the requirements of the enactment on which the Government was acting.

On the 30th July, 1869, Ameer Khan petitioned the Lieutenant-Governor. In this petition, after stating that he had not been informed of the grounds of his arrest, and drawing attention to his great age, and to the serious injury to his business caused by his imprisonment, he prayed that he might be removed to a jail in or near Calcutta, and that he might be allowed separate accommodation. He also asked to have one or two servants to attend him, and to have his meat cooked outside his room; that he might be allowed a bedstead and pillows, and the use of his hookah, and that his friends

might be admitted to visit him at reasonable times. This petition was so far complied with, that the prisoner was on the 23rd August removed from Gya to the Alipore jail, and allowed to communicate with his business servants once a week.

On the 25th of September he presented another petition to the Lieutenant-Governor stating that his health and spirits had suffered from confinement, and that his business was daily suffering for want of his personal attention and supervision; and offering to submit a certificate of two well-known doctors of Calcutta as to the state of his health. In this petition he said that if he were released, he was willing to submit to such surveillance as the Lieutenant-Governor should deem necessary, and that he would present himself as often as should be required before an officer of the Government, and also furnish security to any reasonable extent for his submission to such surveillance and compliance with all the conditions imposed by the Lieutenant-Governor, and for his general good behaviour. To this petition was attached a certificate signed by eleven of the leading English firms in Calcutta, showing the injury likely to be done to his business by the continued imprisonment.

The Lieutenant-Governor refused to comply with this prayer, but allowed him to see his business agents three times a week at the jail.

On the 10th of December, Ameer Khan presented a third petition to the Lieutenant-Governor, in which he said that he had been informed that he was arrested in consequence of his supposed connection with the sect of the Wahabees, but that this was only a surmise, inasmuch as, contrary to the provisions of Regulation III. of 1818, he had never been informed of the grounds of his arrest. In this petition he also most solemnly denied that he had ever, directly or indirectly, assisted or aided with money or advice the Wahabees, or had ever communicated with them by writing or otherwise, and

prayed that he might either be released, or that the grounds upon which the warrant for his arrest had issued should be furnished to him, that he might bring to the notice of the Government all the circumstances relating thereto.

To this most reasonable request no answer was given, and no change has since been made in the prisoner's circumstances.

Wearied and hopeless, Ameer Khan then resolved to address himself to the Governor-General in Council. Accordingly, on the 31st December, encouraged by the happy occasion of a visit from the son of our Queen, he presented a petition to the Governor-General in Council, praying that he might be released subject to such conditions as His Excellency should consider fit and proper. This petition, after shortly recapitulating what had already taken place, and the various applications to the Lieutenant-Governor, concludes with these two paragraphs:

"Your Petitioner submits that the powerful British Government cannot seriously fear the result of an attempt at insurrection or invasion which might be made by the miserable handful of men referred to by the newspapers, or of any attempt to assist your petitioner, even if he were disposed to do so, which however he most earnestly assures your Excellency he is not.

"That on the present joyful occasion of the visit of His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, a son of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, to Calcutta, even the guilty might look for grace and pardon, and your petitioner, who is an innocent man, hopes that on this auspicious occasion some favour may be shown to him, and that he may be released from confinement and suffered to return to his home, subject to such surveillance as to the Government may seem necessary and expedient."

On the 18th of February, 1870, Ameer Khan again petitioned the Supreme Government, and prayed that he might either be released or that the grounds of his arrest might be furnished to

him, so that he might freely bring before the notice of the Governor-General in Council all the circumstances relating to his arrest or to the reasons which induced the Government to order it. No answer was given to either of these petitions to the Supreme Government.

When Ameer Khan's friends found that they had nothing to expect from the mercy or good feeling of the Indian Government, they resolved to apply for his discharge by Habeas Corpus. For such an application a petition and affidavits of the wrong must be used on behalf of the prisoner seeking his release. Application was accordingly made to the superintendent of the jail, where Ameer Khan was confined, that his solicitors might be allowed to communicate with him, for the purpose of obtaining his signature and preparing the necessary documents. This request was refused; the superintendent, Dr. Fawcus, stating that he would neither allow his solicitors an interview with the prisoner, nor furnish them with an inspection of the warrant of detention. Ameer Khan's advisers then applied to the High Court, and that court issued a commission authorizing one of its advocates to swear the prisoner to the truth of the facts contained in his petition and affidavit. On the 26th of July, 1870, the commissioner proceeded to the jail and requested access to the prisoner for the purpose of executing his commission. The superintendent again refused admission to the prisoner, and added these words, "It is by the orders of the Government of India that I refuse you to see Ameer Khan." It will be remarked that the Government of India now appears on the stage for the first time; up to this date, all the proceedings in this unhappy and illegal transaction had been taken under the verbal orders of the Bengal Government.

The application for a Habeas Corpus was heard before a single judge of the High Court, in August, 1870; and the Government justified the arrest and detention of Ameer Khan

under a local Regulation passed by the Indian Council. This Regulation was made in 1818, and originally applied only to the Provinces; but it was now alleged that it had been extended to Calcutta by an Act of the same Council, which was passed in the early part of 1858, during the mutiny. The Government also produced a warrant issued by the Governor-General in Council, and signed on the 7th of May, 1870, at Simla, just ten months after the first arrest. On the production of this warrant, it became at once evident that every step hitherto taken in these high-handed and arbitrary proceedings was illegal, and directly opposed to the requirements of the Regulation on which the Government relied.

The Regulation in question was passed in 1818, immediately after the long war in which we destroyed for ever the great Mahratta Confederacy. In consequence of this war we had several State-prisoners, in the true sense of that word, on our hands. Baji Rao was relegated to Bithour; Appa Sahib was confined at Allahabad; and the infamous Trunbaje was imprisoned in the fort of Chunar. Besides these, we had settled with a large number of inferior chiefs, and had bestowed lands upon them in different parts of the country for the purpose of securing their fidelity and attachment. It was against the conspiracies and machinations of these persons, who were not subjects of ours and who had so lately been in arms against us, that this regulation was directed. It was never intended to give the Executive an arbitrary power of suspending the rights of English subjects, or of imprisoning them at the discretion of a single individual. That this is the true construction of it, is shown by the state in which this country was when the Regulation was first passed and afterwards amended. It was passed when we had these State-prisoners on our hands; it was amended first in 1850, at the close of the second Sikh war, when we had to make arrangements for the safe custody of the family and dependents of Runjeet Singh; it was again

amended in 1858, when the King of Oude and the great Mogul were prisoners in our hands.

The Regulation is entitled "for the confinement of *State Prisoners*," and is not limited to any class or order. It provides that the Governor-General may place under personal restraint individuals against whom there may not be sufficient ground to institute judicial proceedings, or when such proceedings may not be adapted to the nature of the case, or may for other reasons be inadvisable or improper; that in every case the determination should proceed immediately from the authority of the Governor-General in Council; that the grounds of such determination should from time to time come under revision, and the person arrested should at all times be allowed freely to bring to the notice of the Governor-General all circumstances relating either to the grounds of such determination, or to the manner in which it may have been executed; that due attention should be paid to the health of every State-prisoner, and that suitable provision should be made for his support according to his rank and his own wants; and that a warrant of commitment under the authority of the Governor-General in Council, and under the hand of the Chief Secretary, or of one of the Secretaries to the Government, should be issued previous to the arrest.

Let us now examine what has been actually done in Ameer Khan's case by the light of these requirements, and try the conduct of the Indian Government by the text which they themselves quote. The enactment requires that, to secure the responsibility of the Governor-General and Council, a written warrant should be issued before the arrest. We now know that no such warrant was ever issued, and that no warrant whatever was in existence until the 7th of May, 1870, ten months after the arrest. It provides that the determination to arrest should in every case proceed from the Governor-General in Council alone. We have seen that Ameer Khan was arrested

by the verbal orders of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, whose interference was highly illegal. It directs that due attention should be paid to the health of every prisoner, and that suitable provision should be made for his support and wants. Ameer Khan was subjected to the prison rules and prison diet of a common jail; he had neither bed nor bed clothing; he was refused the use of his hookah, a necessary of life in an eastern climate; and he had an armed guard of Hindoos night and day in the same room with himself. The enactment further provides that the grounds of every arrest should from time to time come under revision, and that the prisoner should at all times be allowed freely to bring those grounds to the notice of the Governor-General. We have seen that though Ameer Khan frequently asked for those grounds, he was never furnished with them, and that his legal advisers were not allowed to communicate with him. Am I speaking of a British dependency in which English law prevails, or of some remote province of an Eastern despotism?

The learned judge before whom the application for a Habeas Corpus was heard, delivered a written judgment on the 29th August. He was of opinion that Ameer Khan, though an English subject, and under the protection of the English constitutional law, was not entitled to his writ. On the same day, Ameer Khan's counsel applied for a writ of mainprize, when the same learned judge decided that this writ had become obsolete in England, and therefore obsolete in India. On the 16th of September, on the first day of the Criminal Sessions, Ameer Khan, then in the thirteenth month of his imprisonment, applied by his counsel in open court, that he might be brought to trial without any further unnecessary delay. On the 9th of September, Ameer Khan filed his appeal against the decision of the single judge in the matter of his Habeas Corpus. In consequence of the long vacation, this appeal did not come on till the 7th of December, 1870. The appeal was heard

before two judges of the High Court. These gentlemen confirmed the decision of the single judge, and dismissed the appeal. From this latter decision Ameer Khan is about to appeal to the Privy Council. While the matter is in this state, and still *sub judice*, it would be obviously improper for me to question these decisions. But the propriety of acting on such a regulation, as the Governor-General and his Council have done, opens a very different question.

I will assume then, *for the present*, that a local enactment which repeals Magna Charta, nullifies all the guarantees of the liberty of Englishmen and English subjects in India, and hands over every person in this country, without distinction of language, birth, or blood, tied and bound at the feet of arbitrary and irresponsible power, has a legal existence. But it is one thing to possess, and another thing to exercise, arbitrary and uncontrolled power :

“ Oh, it is excellent
To have a giant's strength ; but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant.”

Let it be granted that a strong central authority, available on the spot in time of need, and having the power of suspending the Habeas Corpus, is necessary in India. This power should be given only for a definite period by an Act of the Indian Legislature, strictly limiting that period before hand, and subject to revision by the Home Government. This is the invariable practice of the Imperial Parliament, which exercises an innate and not a delegated authority. The idea of a power, such as Lord Mayo and the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal have claimed and exercised in the case of Ameer Khan, being the normal standing rule in India, and of the life and liberty of every one in that country being subject to the uncertain and fluctuating discretion of an individual, is abhorrent and foreign to English policy and English law ; a system of law “ which appears to have been built up with one

paramount object, the preservation of the liberty of the subject, to which all other considerations, all considerations of legal symmetry have been forced to give way.”* I say the life and liberty of every one, for the regulation contains no limit either as to class of persons or term of imprisonment. At a time when a member of Lord Mayo’s Council declares, without a sign of dissent from any other member, that the Mahomedans of India are loyal, in the midst of profound peace, and in an impregnable capital, the Governor-General has had recourse to the most dreadful instrument of repression—hopeless and protracted imprisonment. This instance of the exercise of such a power at such a conjuncture, shows the absolute necessity of a special Act in every case, which shall declare the occasion on which, and limit the period during which, the power shall be exercised.

There was no necessity for Lord Mayo to recur to a local enactment. There already existed a *loi des suspects* in India. The Governor-General was possessed of a power of summary arrest under the act of the English Parliament, but the authority given by the English Act was limited as to the time of imprisonment, and contained the constitutional provisions that the accused should be furnished with a copy of the charge, and should be allowed to produce his witnesses. By the 33 George III., c. 52, passed in 1793, long before this hateful Regulation, it was enacted that the Governor-General might order the arrest of any one he suspected of a correspondence dangerous to the peace and security of any of our possessions in India; that the accused should, within five days, be furnished with a copy of the charge against him, and that witnesses for and against him should be examined and cross-examined upon oath; and that if, notwithstanding this examination, there should still appear to the Governor-General reasonable grounds

* The Lord Justice-Clerk of Scotland, in a paper read before the Juridical Society.

for the charge and for continuing the imprisonment, the person accused should remain in custody until brought to trial in India or sent home to England for that purpose. It may well be asked—Why did not Lord Mayo proceed under this Act, instead of having recourse to the doubtful enactment of a local Legislature? Compare the careful provisions for the liberty of the subject contained in this Act with what has been actually done to Ameer Khan. At a time of life when he has passed the term allotted to most men, without a moment's notice or a moment's preparation, he is torn from his home and family, and transported to a distant country where he has neither friends nor companions; he is deprived of the presence of relatives and the assistance of his legal advisers; he is refused a copy of the charge against him, and the grounds of his imprisonment are withheld from him, though he petitions both the Governor-General and the Lieutenant-Governor for them; he is deprived of the common necessities of life, until the Government is shamed into granting them; and, though no accusation has ever on any occasion been preferred against him, he is kept upwards of eighteen months in hopeless confinement.

The constituent parts of the Indian Legislature are the Crown at home, and the Governor-General and his Council in India. The concurrence of these two authorities legitimates any enactment which is within the general powers of legislation conferred upon them by the Imperial Parliament. Generally an Act of the Indian Legislature is first passed in the Council here, and is then sent home to await the assent or disallowance of the Crown. Acts of grace and pardon invariably, by the custom of England, proceed in the first instance from the Crown itself, instead of originating below as in ordinary matters. On the 18th November, 1858, when the passions excited by the mutiny had cooled down, her Majesty the Queen issued a general Act of grace and pardon addressed to

the Princes, Chiefs, and people of India. In this humane and gracious manifesto the following words occur: "By the advice and consent aforesaid we have taken upon ourselves the said Government; we hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil." This Act was accepted by the Governor-General and Council, and was published by them in this country. On this acceptance and passing, it became an Act of the Indian Legislature. Here, then, we have a legislative promise, a most solemn obligation on the part of the Government that the natives of India shall enjoy the same rights which all others of Her Majesty's subjects enjoy: a declaration of equal laws and privileges which can never be set aside on the doubtful plea of political necessity. What a commentary on this Act is furnished by Lord Mayo's proceedings! Notwithstanding this charter of Indian liberties, notwithstanding the royal word and the honour of England pledged to the natives of this country by this proclamation and by its legislative confirmation, Lord Mayo and his Council, passing by an English Act which gave them only limited powers and provided for the liberty of the subject, imprison without cause and take suspicion for guilt. By so doing they falsify the gracious language of their Royal Mistress, and scatter fear and dismay, and therefore disloyalty, among the communities entrusted to their care.

Lastly I would draw attention to the terrible inequality which such arbitrary proceedings as these introduce into the administration of justice in India. Lord Mayo knows well that if he were to arrest and imprison, on mere suspicion, the meanest English clerk in Calcutta, his reign would not last a month—that he would excite such a storm of popular indignation as would insure his immediate recall; but he sees no such danger in attacking the liberties of the native subjects, and

relies for his defence on the apathy of the dominant race and the misconceptions prevalent in England regarding our Indian Government. From that apathy I now appeal, on behalf of Ameer Khan and his fellow-victims, to the free voice and instincts of the English people; a people whose highest mission, one of the greatest of their leaders, Mr. Bright, has declared to be, the assertion of personal freedom all over the globe.

Ameer Khan is not the only merchant of Calcutta who has been thus torn from his home and imprisoned without a charge being laid against him. On the 12th of July, 1869, two days after that on which Ameer Khan had been taken into custody, another Mahomedan of equal rank and position, Hashmadad Khan, a man of sixty-six years of age, was arrested and immediately taken to the jail at Patna, a distance of four hundred miles from Calcutta. Both are equals in misfortune, and their stories are almost precisely similar. The same steps which were taken by Ameer Khan to procure his release, have been taken by Hashmadad Khan, and every word I have written applies equally to his case.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

T. DUNBAR INGRAM.

LETTER II.

Patna, 24th February, 1871.

SIR,

In my former letter I drew your attention to the retrograde policy of repression and wholesale imprisonment adopted by Lord Mayo and the present Government of India. When I wrote that letter, I was not aware of the extent to which they had stretched this policy. I then stated that upwards of sixty political prisoners were languishing in the prisons of Bengal and the Upper Provinces. I am now able to say, that instead of sixty, six hundred suspected persons have been arrested and are now imprisoned under the provisions of Regulation III. of 1818, and that further arrests are still being made.

I now undertake to show that Lord Mayo and his Council have, in violation of British faith pledged to the Zemindars of Bengal, seriously weakened the security of landed property wherever the Perpetual Settlement prevails. The proofs of this charge are drawn from the same sources which I quoted when relating the cases of Ameer Khan and Hashmadad Khan: they are to be found in Judicial Records, in Government Gazettes, and in the Acts of the Indian Legislature.

The Presidency of Bengal extends over a space of 300,000 square miles, and is inhabited by a population of 42 millions. Throughout these vast territories, which equal in extent and population France, Belgium, and Holland united, the relations between the State and the land-owners have been fixed

for ever by a universal and legislative assurance, which is commonly known as the Perpetual Settlement. This settlement, after many temporary experiments, was finally adopted and made perpetual in 1793, in which year the Regulation which enacts it was passed by the Indian Legislature. This Regulation contains two fundamental measures (I quote the language of the Legislature); it declares the property in the soil to be vested in those Zemindars with whom the settlement was made, and it secures them in their possessions, and fixes for ever the revenue payable to the Government from each estate. This universal root of title was publicly proclaimed by the Government throughout India: and the local enactment which secures it was recognised and confirmed by a subsequent Act of the Imperial Legislature.

It is impossible to over-estimate the feelings with which this measure is regarded by the natives of the Bengal Presidency, or the value which they attach to it. What the Great Charter is to Englishmen, the Perpetual Settlement is to Bengalees. It is the date from which the most remote legal limitation starts, and no question anterior to it is ever allowed to be raised by Courts of Justice. When it was first enacted, it was the greatest boon which was ever given to an expectant and long-suffering community. The annual settlements which were formerly made with the Nawabs of Bengal, furnished them with perpetual and recurring opportunities of exaction and oppression, of which they were not slow to avail themselves, and of which the remembrance is deeply impressed upon the national mind. Even when the English first obtained possession of this Presidency, the temporary settlements which were then the custom brought every land-holder in Bengal into collision with the Government, and gave rise to many other serious evils which it was the policy and object of the Perpetual Settlement to put an end to for ever. It requires no words of mine to show the absolute necessity of

preserving intact a provision which secures to every *tenant in capite* throughout Bengal the fruits of his labour and improvements, and prevents all inquisitorial investigation by the State into the title of his land and the value of its products. To do the Indian Government justice, they have always been alive to this necessity, and no infringement of this settlement ever occurred up to the year 1869. It was reserved for Lord Mayo and his Council to violate the sacredness of private property, and to weaken the best security of public peace and tranquillity which any country ever possessed.

In 1822, the Governor-General in Council came to the conclusion that the system of government established by law, and the ordinary rules for the administration of civil and criminal justice, were unsuited to the tribes which inhabit the Garrow Hills. As the preamble of the Regulation which was passed in this year expresses it, "With a view to promote the desirable object of reclaiming these races to the habits of civilized life, it seems necessary that a special plan for the administration of justice, and of a kind adapted to their peculiar customs and prejudices, should be arranged and concerted with their head-man, and that measures should at the same time be taken for freeing them from any dependence on the Zemindars of the British Provinces." To carry out the doubtful policy of reclaiming barbarous tribes by a suspension of the general rules which insure the security of life and property, it was enacted by this Regulation that the north-eastern parts of Rungpore, viz.: the Sub-divisions of Gowalpara, Dhoobree, and Kurrumbaree, should be separated from that district, and that the administration of civil and criminal justice within these Sub-divisions should be vested in a Commissioner, who should be responsible only to the Governor-General. It was also provided by the same Regulation, that it should be competent to the Governor-General in Council to direct the separation of any tracts of country occupied by Garrow moun-

taineers *within the above-named three Sub-divisions* from the estates of neighbouring Zemindars, and to discontinue the collection by Zemindars of any cesses or tributes levied by them on such mountaineers within the same three Sub-divisions. The Government, misunderstanding the effects of the Regulation, thought that it gave them a general power of separating all tracts occupied by Garrow mountaineers from the estates of neighbouring Zemindars, whether these tracts were within the three Sub-divisions specified in the Regulation or not, and of preventing the collection of any dues from the mountaineers in such tracts : and acting under this impression, they proceeded to carry out the provisions of the Regulation.

There was in those parts a large landed proprietor, possessed of one of those enormous estates which are only to be found in India—Rajah Raj Kissen Singh—who occupied among his own people pretty much the same position that the Duke of Argyle does in Scotland. This man owned, besides other estates, the district of Shooshing, which stretched from the plains at the foot of the Garrow Hills a considerable way into the Hills themselves. This district was not within the local limits to which the Regulation applied, and was a permanently settled estate ; and in the hill portion of it the Rajah and his ancestors had, from time immemorial, enjoyed and exercised undisputed rights of ownership, collected dues, and received rents from the mountaineers to whom he and his predecessors had been in the habit of letting certain forest rights.

The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal* thought proper to attack this Zemindar's rights ; and in the year 1859, although the Indian Government had permanently settled this district with the ancestors of the Rajah, and his possession and enjoy-

* SIR WILLIAM GREY.—This is the same gentleman who illegally ordered the arrest of Ameer Khan and Hashmadad Khan.

ment of it was legislatively guaranteed, and although it was not in any of the three Sub-divisions in which the Regulation gave the Government extraordinary powers, the officers of the Lieutenant-Governor drew a boundary line cutting off a large portion, and forbade the Rajah to exercise his old proprietary rights in the portion beyond, and on the hill-side of, that line.

The Rajah contested the justice of this proceeding, and instituted a suit in the local Courts for the declaration of his rights on the portion so cut off by the boundary line. He was successful in this suit, and thereupon the Government appealed to the High Court, Calcutta, against the decision.

The appeal was finally heard in March, 1868, before the Chief Justice and two other Judges—gentlemen who are naturally not unfavourably disposed towards the claims and views of the Government. These Judges took a very different view of the matter from that entertained by the Lieutenant-Governor. They decided that the dues taken by the Rajah were not illegal, and that the officers of the Government had wrongfully drawn a boundary line through the Rajah's estate ; and further, they characterized the proceedings throughout as irregular and anomalous. From this decision of the highest Court of Appeal in this country, the Indian Government appealed to Her Majesty's Privy Council : that is, as we shall shortly see, they went through the form of instituting an appeal to a Court whose decision they were already resolved to disqualify themselves from obeying.* The appeal to the Privy Council is pending at the present moment.

Here, before proceeding any further, it is necessary that I should draw your attention to the constitution of the Executive and the Legislative Councils of the Indian Government, and to the evils consequent on their practical identity.

* The history of the case and the judgment of the High Court are to be found in the 9th vol., *Weekly Reporter*, which contained at that time the authorized Reports of the Court.

Public opinion and criticism are the life and essence of all responsibility, and whatever interferes with their spontaneous growth and development is an evil of the first magnitude. What publicity has effected in England is evident to all from the purity of our Courts of Justice and the universal respect which is felt for the two Houses of Parliament. Nor can we doubt, from the experience of other countries, that things would have been far different if our judges had decided in secret, or if our Legislature had conducted their debates with closed doors. If publicity is desirable in England, it is *necessary* in India. In England, the Executive represented by the Cabinet is perfectly distinct from the Legislature, and this separation secures the existence of a healthy mutual distrust and criticism. No such distinction exists here; the Indian Legislative Council consists merely of the Executive Council, with a few additional non-official members temporarily nominated by the head of the Executive for legislative purposes only; and as for six months of each year the Council is held at Simla—a distance of 1,300 miles from Calcutta—the non-official members are unable to attend its meetings during that time. The effect of this is that, while the Council meets at Simla, the Executive and the Legislative Councils are one and the same body. This identity is pregnant with danger to the last degree, and must continue to be so as long as men are liable to err; whatever the Executive wishes, the Legislative grants; whatever illegality the Executive is guilty of, the Legislative ratifies and confirms. There is no discussion in the proper sense of the word, as each official member of the Council has his own department to look after, and the system throws into the hands of the Government an immediate power of action which is perfectly absolute and uncontrolled.

Such being the constitution of these Councils, mark the next step taken by our Government while their appeal in this

case was still pending in the Privy Council. It is not too much to say that no other civilized Government would have proceeded further in the matter against and in the teeth of a decision of their highest Court of Appeal. No other Government would have incapacitated themselves by their own act from carrying out the decision of the Court before which they had instituted an appeal, or taken forcibly, under the cloak of legislation, what they had been prevented taking legally. But the Indian Government have no scruples, and they at once availed themselves with fatal facility of the opportunity offered by the constitution of their Councils.

On the 10th of September, 1869, a Bill called the "Garrow Hills' Act," was introduced into the Legislative Council. This Bill gave the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal the power of separating from the estates of neighbouring Zemindars any portions of the hill tracts bordering on such estates which were attached, or were claimed by the owners thereof to be attached, to the same. As it was necessary to gag the Courts of Justice before this piece of injustice could be consummated, the Bill also gave the Lieutenant-Governor power to withdraw the portions so separated from the jurisdiction of the ordinary Courts, and to entrust them to officers responsible to himself only. Finally the Bill contained a provision that compensation should be awarded to the Zemindars who should be deprived of their property. The Bill became law on the 24th September, 1869, and the Lieutenant-Governor proceeded immediately to act upon it. He cut off from the Rajah's estates the District of Shooshing, and confiscated all the proprietary rights of the Rajah in that district, although these rights were secured by local and Imperial legislative enactments.

I call your attention to the dates of the appeal, the introduction of the measure, and its final passing. It will be remembered that the decision of the Appeal Court was given in

March, 1868. At the time when this Bill was introduced into the Legislative Council, viz.: the 10th of September, 1869, that body was sitting at Simla, as remote and as secluded as the Venetian Council of Ten, and consisted only of the official members. No notice was given to the Rajah that his proprietary rights were about to be swept away; he had no opportunity of remonstrating against such an act of injustice, or of appearing by Council to protest against it. Without discussion, without argument, this unrighteous Act was passed on the 24th of the same September, within the short space of a fortnight from its first introduction, and the rights of a British subject were carelessly whispered away.

This Bill was introduced at the instigation of Sir William Grey, the present Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal; and Mr. F. R. Cockerell, a member of the Civil Service, had charge of it. The wisdom of our legislators will be best judged by their words. *The Gazette of India*, the official record of the proceedings of the Legislative Council, represents Mr. Cockerell as making use of the following words when introducing the Bill:—"Provision was also made for the enforcement by the Local Government of the separation from the estates of Zemindars of any portion of the Hill tracts bordering on such estates, which were attached or were claimed to be attached, to the same, and for awarding the Zemindars such compensation as they might be found to be entitled to for the *compulsory surrender* of their rights." This is the first time that a yielding to an irresistible act of violence has been called a compulsory surrender. If Mr. Cockerell, during a tour in Greece, were seized by brigands and compelled to pay a ransom for his freedom, I wonder whether he would afterwards speak of the loss of his money as a "compulsory surrender."

It is almost needless to add that no compensation has ever been offered or awarded to the Rajah for the loss of his property.

One word as to the compensation to be given to the Zemindars for this "compulsory surrender" of their estates. The provisions in the Act are as follows:—"The Lieutenant-Governor may prevent, by such means as he may think fit, the collection by Zemindars or other persons of any cesses, tributes, or exactions, on whatsoever pretence the same may be levied from the inhabitants of the tract of country to which this Act applies, and may make arrangements either for the remission of such cesses, tributes, and exactions, or for their collection direct by the officers of Government, *making such compensation to Zemindars, or others justly entitled thereto, for the relinquishment of the same, as may to him seem proper.*"

In other words, no Court, no jury, no independent authority is to determine the amount of compensation, or stand between the Government and the timid Bengalee. The same will which enforces the surrender is to decide upon the price. I am again reminded of the brigands, amongst whom the same individual compels the ransom and assesses the amount. I ask how is a manly feeling of independence to grow up among a people whose nobles are thus treated, and whose proprietary rights are openly set at nought by the Government which ought to cherish and protect them? The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, who is responsible for this Act, knows perfectly well that such proceedings are directly contrary to what is done at home, and that in England no violation of the rights of private property is allowed even for the general good. He knows more than this; that English policy and the spirit of the English constitution, regards the subject's property as only less sacred than his person: and that in England a rood of ground is never transferred or affected, even by the Legislature, without notice to its owner, calling upon him to defend his right and shew cause against the transfer.

These proceedings of the Government are known to, and have caused alarm to, every Zemindar in Bengal; yet there is no general agitation, no appearance of popular distrust. It would be difficult to convey to a European an idea of the awe with which all action taken by the Government is viewed by the natives of this country. Centuries of equal laws, popular representation, and the exercise of local self-government have given an independence of character to Englishmen which is unknown in the East. An act of oppression at home rouses general indignation, meetings are held and appeals made to public opinion until the obnoxious measure is withdrawn. But there is nothing of this kind here. Former oppression, and the long-continued political depression, which is the worst form of oppression, have done their work upon the native of this Presidency, whether he be Hindoo or Mahomedan. He is timid beyond expression, for he knows that he is without power or influence. He is deeply conscious of his exclusion from all political position in his native country, and feels that he is a stranger and an alien in the land of his birth. This characteristic of the native mind aggravates the criminality of every arbitrary and illegal act of the Government, inasmuch as each injustice confirms the fault, prevents the growth of national manhood, and delays the accomplishment of our plain duty to India; which is, if I understand it rightly, to establish a new Britain in the East, filled to overflowing with multitudes of affectionate, manly, and independent fellow-citizens and fellow-subjects.

I am well aware that an assumption runs through both these letters of mine—an assumption which will not be allowed to pass unnoticed. That assumption is, that the same measure of justice and equity with which the subject is treated at home should be meted out to the natives of this country. There is a large class of persons who say, “justice and equity are all very well in England, but they would not do in India.

There we reign by the sword. *There* we are seated on a powder mine which may explode at any time." My opinion is very different from that held by this class; and, as I am about to state it, I am bound to set out the opportunities I have had for forming it.

During the last five years I have been Professor of Jurisprudence and Native Laws in the Presidency College, Calcutta, and one of the Examiners of Pleaders in the Provincial Courts of Bengal. The duties of these two offices have brought me into close and frequent communication with the *élite* of the youth of this Presidency, who naturally choose the legal profession as being the only one in which they can rise to any position. My practice as an advocate, and the intimate and confidential familiarity resulting therefrom, have also made me acquainted with the feelings and convictions of very many of the natives both in Calcutta and the provinces. The experience, however, of any one individual must be considered to be small, when he is speaking of such a subject as national feeling and sentiment, and I have formed the opinion which I hold, principally from a long-continued study and consideration of the native newspapers;* and this opinion has been strengthened and confirmed by the striking fact that sedition is a crime which is now unknown in India. I am able to say, without fear of contradiction, that since the Mutiny, now a period of thirteen years, no trial for sedition has ever taken place; and that since the same date, with the exception of the present alleged Wahabee conspiracy, no person has ever been charged with, or tried for, treason or disaffection throughout the whole extent of this "Confederated Continent."

My opinion then is that the Empire of England in India is founded upon a rock, which has not been shaken even by the

* Some of the Native newspapers are printed in English: and there is a special officer of the Government whose duty it is to translate and publish the political and public articles which appear in the vernacular papers.

universal dissatisfaction arising from the oppressive exaction of the Income-tax. The Sikh has given up his dream of conquest, and is now a peaceful cultivator of the soil. The Mogul has yielded to the irresistible logic of facts, and has loyally acquiesced in the change of circumstances and the transfer of dominion. In every Mosque in India the *Khootba* is read to the congregation in the name of our sovereign, Queen Victoria. There is not a Mahomedan in the country who is not grateful for the perfect toleration enjoyed by his religion, and who does not look, for the continuance of that toleration, to the protection of the English Government against possible revivals of Hindoo fanaticism. There is not an English-speaking Hindoo, and they may be counted by millions, and are rapidly increasing, who does not look upon England as his nursing mother and guide in intellectual culture. The Roman never was more strongly seated, even in those countries to which he gave a new language and literature, than the Briton is in India.

Open the Civil Service here as it is open at home. Wherever there is an Englishman in a position of authority, place a native by his side, who will understand his fellow-countrymen, and protect them against the exactions of the lower officials. Separate the executive service from the judicial, and make the latter a really independent service. Give over making laws upon laws, and let the natural attrition of the two civilizations go on and bring forth its wholesome and slow-ripening fruit in due season. Do away with the rigid line of demarcation which separates the covenanted and the uncovenanted services, prevents the promotion of merit, and weighs like lead upon the talent of the country; initiate a system of representation for which the people are partially ripe; and you will have given 100,000,000, not of loyal, for that they are already, but of grateful subjects to our common Sovereign; you will have erected a wall more lasting than brass against any foreign interference with the most splendid of our dependencies;

and you will have placed civil harmony between Englishmen and Natives upon its only sure and solid foundations—equal rights and mutual respect.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

T. DUNBAR INGRAM.

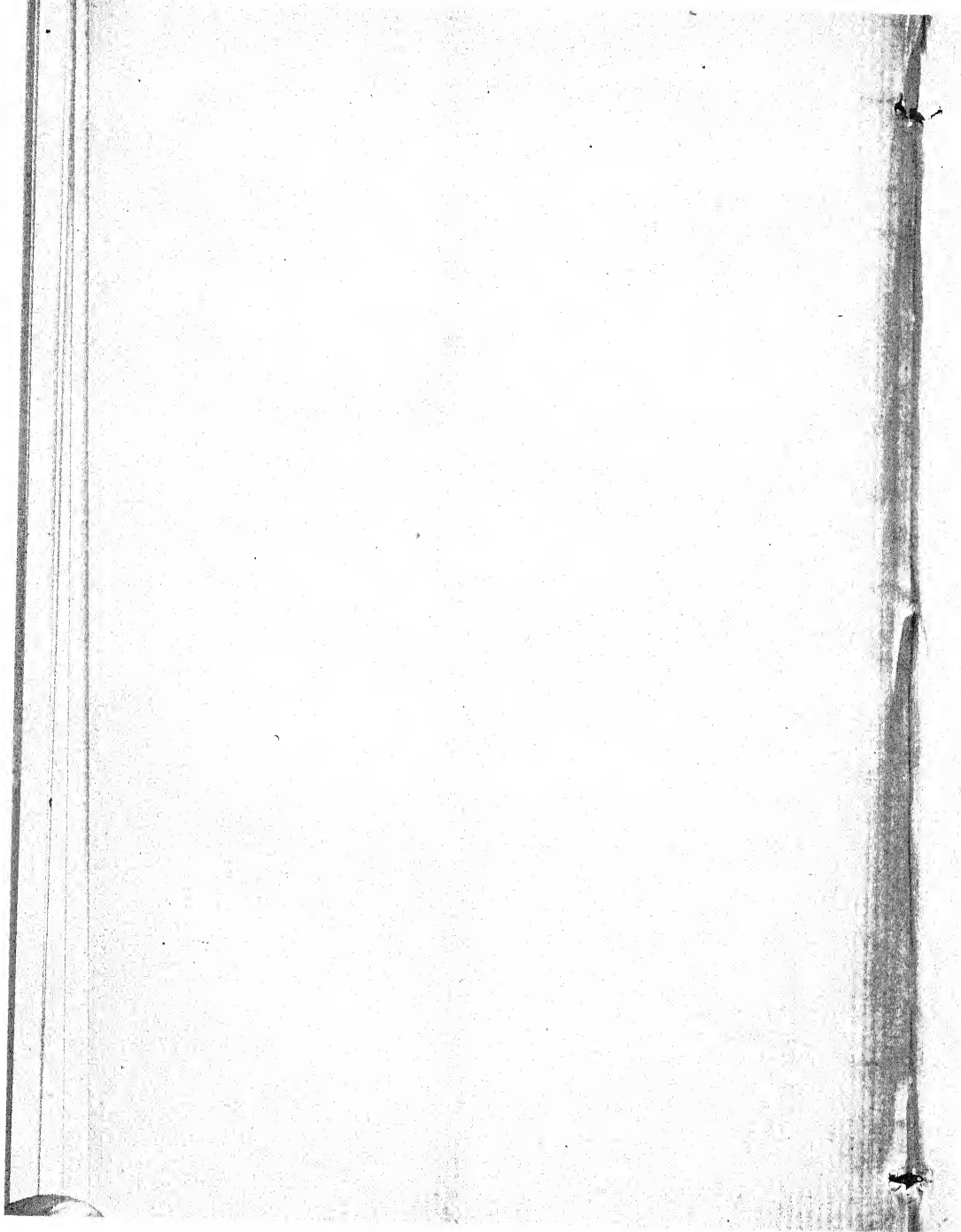
NOTE ON LETTER I.

SINCE the above letter was written, Ameer Khan and Hash-madad Khan have been brought to trial. The manner in which this was done in the case of the former was thus commented on in the Calcutta *Englishman* of the 12th of January, 1871 :

" A termination has at length been put to the scandal attending the prolonged detention of Ameer Khan, without trial and without any formal charge being made against him. If our information is correct, however, this has not been done without giving rise to another scandal scarcely less discreditable to those concerned. On Tuesday afternoon, as we learn, this old man was suddenly informed by Mr. Dobson that orders had arrived for his release, and that he might therefore pack up his goods and depart. We may imagine the effect that such an announcement must have had upon a man who had been upwards of eighteen months in jail, and who had probably begun to despair of being released by any less powerful authority than death. Little thinking that he was but being made the victim of a deception, so heartless that we can only suppose it to have arisen from misunderstanding, Ameer Khan prepared to leave the Alipore Jail, to go to his home, as he imagined, a free man. Mr. Dobson congratulated him on his release, conducted him to the door of the jail, and dismissed him with, ' Salaam, Khan Sahib.' His newly-acquired freedom, however, was to end where it began. At the gate of the jail, an Inspector was waiting, armed with a warrant from Patna, to arrest him on a charge of waging, and attempting to wage, or abetting, war against the Queen. Instead of going to his home, he was taken under the fresh warrant, as a prisoner, to the Howrah railway station, and thence forwarded by train to Patna, where he is to be tried on the 20th January.

Whether there is any hardship in this man being arrested and brought to trial on such a charge, we can offer no opinion. Until the result of the trial is known, there must be doubts on that point, which did not apply to the hardship of his prolonged detention. There could, however, have been no necessity for so carrying out the transfer of the prisoner as to create in his mind a belief which was to be cruelly disappointed. The dictates of humanity would, we should have supposed, rather have led those who had charge of him to break to him the real nature of his position as tenderly as possible. Or, had Ameer Khan been considered beneath such an expense of kindness, we might have expected the authorities concerned to have been above lending themselves to a device which would have disgraced Messrs. Dodson and Fogg."

The trial has not yet terminated.



THE
MAHOMMEDANS OF INDIA.

A Lecture

DELIVERED TO THE "LONDON ASSOCIATION IN AID OF SOCIAL
PROGRESS IN INDIA,"

AT THE SOCIETY OF ARTS, JOHN STREET, ADELPHI,
Nov. 16, 1871,

BY

SYED AMEER ALI, M.A., LL.B., M.R.A.S.,

STUDENT OF THE INNER TEMPLE.

PRINTED FOR THE ASSOCIATION.

1872.

NOTE.

THE Council of the Association does not hold itself responsible for all the opinions expressed in the Lectures and Papers which may be published under its auspices. It simply seeks to give publicity to the views of various gentlemen who are known to have studied the subjects of which they treat, and whose views justly carry weight.

THE MAHOMMEDANS OF INDIA.

I STAND here to-night, not merely in performance of the duty I owe you as a member of this Association, but also to fulfil in some respect a duty I owe to my co-religionists at large, whose voice has been hitherto unheard amongst you.

The delicate handling which the nature of the subject requires, combined with the necessity of hurting as few susceptibilities as possible, makes a discourse on the Mahommedans of India peculiarly difficult. You will, therefore, I hope, make every allowance for my shortcomings. In this discourse, I shall, in the first place, try to give you a brief sketch of the early Mahommedans; and then rapidly passing in review before you the various causes which led to the decadence of the Mahommedan community under British rule, I shall state, in the second place, some of the remedies required; I shall then explain the new movement for education and social amelioration going on amongst us; and shall conclude with an account of the social condition of our women.

But before I enter upon the real subject of the lecture, let me call your attention to the vague application by English people of the term Mahommedan or Mussulman. Sometimes it is used to signify the faith or religion of the Arabian prophet, and sometimes the people who profess that faith in India. Such indiscriminate use of these terms gives rise to great recklessness in talk as well as writing. I beg you to remember, that throughout my discourse, by the terms Mussulman and Mahommedan, I mean the nation, and the people, without any reference to their creed; though religion is the national bond amongst them, just as among many other nations.

From the description of Mahommedan historians—the best authorities on the state of society in India at the time of their conquest—it would appear that the condition of Hindostan about that period was as miserable as can be conceived. The old Vedic worship had lost its hold; Brahminism, though successful in expelling Buddhism from India, could not recover its old influence over the minds of its followers; all religious life had become extinct. The various rajas were fighting among themselves; the rajah of Punjab was often in need of assistance from his Mahommedan neighbours against his Hindu rivals.* At such times, the Mussulmans could not help observing the internal dissensions existing among the Hindoos, and the richness of their country. Impelled by the love of conquest, which animates all nations without exception, they gradually advanced their outposts

* See the *Habeeb-us-Siyar*.

in the Punjab, until one of their sovereigns established, after one decisive battle, the Mahommedan dominion in the heart of Hindustan.

The conquest of India by the Mahommedans occasioned a most extraordinary influence upon the relations of that country with the foreign world, whom, under the generic name of *yavans* and *malechas*, she had kept shut out from herself. The introduction of the Mussulman element broke up, if not effectually, at least to an extent not before surpassed in history, a state of society under which the old gradations of rank had by the process of time acquired so inflexible and rigid a character that all hope of progress from within had become a matter of impossibility.

Many Europeans are under the impression that the Mussulmans entered India in hordes, like the Goths or the Huns in the Western World. One example will sufficiently show the falsity of this notion. Bakhtyar Khilji conquered Bengal with forty horsemen. A learned Bengalli gentleman, in a lecture on "Female Education in Bengal," applied the terms mean and cowardly to the Mahommedans; but I do not see where the meanness or cowardice lies, nor do I see the need of such hard expressions. It reminds one of those African tribes who, so long as the monarch of the forest is free, call him by all endearing names, but the moment he is down the endearment changes into abuse.

As soon as the Mahommedans settled down after their conquest, the tolerant spirit of their laws showed itself at once in their placing their Hindu fellow-subjects on the same political footing with themselves. The invidious capitation-tax imposed in the first flush of orthodoxy, in consideration of the conquered race remaining subject to its own laws, was abolished in the second century of the empire. Every post of honour and emolument, every dignity was open to the Hindus equally with the Mahommedans. No distinction of race or creed was ever made. The Hindu chiefs were equally entrusted with the commands of armies, and were equally the counsellors of the sovereigns.*

Every single fact shows that, prior to the time of Aurungzebe, whose reign saw the commencement of the decline of the Mogul Empire, a result of his bigotry and narrow-mindedness, the Hindus were politically in no way inferior to the Mahommedans, nor occupied a lower status.

On the death of Aurungzebe the magnificent fabric of the Mogul Empire began crumbling to pieces; and by the time of Mohammed Shah it was a total wreck. Like the hundreds of vampires which in the Indian story spring up with the fall of the master-magician, to drag him down into their regions, so the weakness of Aurungzebe's successors raised up a host of enemies on every side, with whom, on account of their incapacity, they were unable to cope. The Mahratta marauders began plundering up to the gates of Delhi; and though they received a terrible blow at Panipat, from the hands of the invincible Durrani, with his retreat to the mountains they at once recommenced their system of plunder. India became a scene of misery and misrule; the various chieftains who had started up in the provinces were fighting among themselves; the sovereign was a prisoner in his own capital. There was no order and no law. Take a page from the last days of the Roman Empire, and instead of the proconsul and the Goths, read Indian satraps and Mahrattas or Affghans, and you will have an idea of the condition of the people.

Whilst the country was in this strait, the British, mere traders at first, presented themselves in the garb of auxiliaries of one satrap against another. Before long, however, for the future happiness of India, they threw off this character, and appeared as the protectors of law and order in Hindustan. In the miserable plight into which India had fallen after the general disruption of the Mahommedan Empire, the appearance of a power

* Compare Davenport (Apology for Mohammed) p. 100—102.

which could lay the demons of anarchy and misrule; which could curb the marauding spirit of freebooters and plunderers brought forth by the times; which could reunite into one homogeneous whole, the jarring elements into which Indian society had broken up, and could become to India the medium of intercommunication with the West—already monopolising the leadership of thought—the appearance of such a power was providential. It has been said in England that “the memories of past sovereigns in the minds of Mussulmans are incompatible with their loyalty to the British rule.” I for one do not see the logic of this reasoning. A Mahommedan may have memories of past sovereigns, and yet fully appreciate the blessings of peace and justice, law, and order—in fact, be perfectly loyal and faithful to the British Government.

I have so far referred to the past to give you an idea of the present.

Among the Mahommedans inhabiting the different parts of India, the same ethnical differences are observable as among the Hindus.

I do not know much of Southern India, and therefore confine my remarks generally to the valley of the Ganges, comprehending Bengal proper and the tableland of Hindustan.

In Northern India, the province of Behar inclusive, the Mahommedans are as a rule the descendants of the old settlers from the countries westward of the Punjab, or of converts from the higher Hindu castes like the Rajpoots, who, on their conversion, were designated Pathans, and into whose fraternity they were admitted on account of a strong similarity in traits of character and a congenial disposition.

The vernacular language of the Mussulmans in these parts is Urdu, or Hindustani—a composite language like English, formed by the intermixture of the various races brought together by the Mahommedan conquest, and possessing within itself an expansiveness and elasticity hardly surpassed by any other language that I am aware of. From Punjab as far down as Bhagulpoor, in the Lieut.-Governorship of Bengal, Urdu, more or less pure, is not only the vernacular of the Mahommedans, but also of the majority of Hindus.

After Bhagulpoor commences the region of the Bengalli dialect. If a straight line were drawn, dividing the district of Poorneah into two, from north to south, and were then continued through the districts of Bhagulpoor and Beerbhoom, it would roughly mark off the two regions.

Many Mahommedan families have settled, quite in recent times, from the North-west and Behar in Bengal proper. These are called Hindustanis, and few of them ever understand Bengalli. In most of the districts of Upper Bengal, such as Beerbhoom, Midnapoor, Dinajpoor, Monghyr, Poorneah, and to some extent the English district of the twenty-four Pergunahs, the Mahommedans speak Urdu, though not with the same purity as a native of Lucknow or Delhi, and know only enough of Bengalli for the purposes of social intercourse with their Hindu neighbours.

Eastward, Urdu becomes merely the town language of the Mahommedans, Bengalli being the vernacular of the rural Mussulmans, which might to some extent be said of some parts of Upper Bengal. And so it goes on dwindling in influence until at last, in the deltaic districts, it loses all its vitality, the Mussulmans here speaking a *patois* of the Bengalli dialect.

Urdu, however, as the language of the conquering nation, is understood throughout India, at least wherever the Mahommedan power made itself felt. I gave you this sketch of the ethnological division of the Mussulmans to make the following remarks more intelligible.

From the time of the establishment of the British dominion until the Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck, the Mahommedans held an equal rank with the other Indian races. Every department of State service was open to and occupied by them along with the Hindus. Some

of the Governor-Generals were warm patrons of Mussulman learning. The memory of the Marquis of Wellesley and the Marquis of Hastings is even now dear to the Mahomedan population. Up to the time of Lord William Bentinck, Hindustani-Persian was the official language of the Government. In introducing English as the State language of India, our British rulers did not allow the Indian Mussulmans sufficient time to prepare themselves for the sudden though inevitable change.

The Hindus, especially the Bengallis, being perhaps less conservative, more ductile, or more in favour with the governing race, soon supplanted the Mahomedans in almost every office in the Government employ.* Under their own sovereigns the army was open to the Mussulmans. The British Government excluded them from their proper vocation. Other nations, in the dearth of any other occupation, have taken to commerce as a last resource; but the Mussulman aristocrat almost equals the German *junker* in his contempt of trade. And even had he eschewed his pride, commerce would hardly have furnished him with a calling, in the sense in which the term is here understood.

Until the time of Lord William Bentinck, the whole system of education throughout Bengal and Northern India was on a Mahomedan basis, and those thus educated held the State patronage. In the meantime, a new system of education was placed side by side with the old, and men began to be trained up, who, belonging as they did to a different race, could adapt themselves more easily to the new order of things. Suddenly the old system was abolished, and those who had felt secure in a fool's paradise soon found themselves supplanted by men who had been specially trained according to the new method. The Mussulmans would easily have followed the example of their Hindu compatriots, and reconciled themselves to the altered state of circumstances. But our British rulers of those days, whilst trying to impart to us, conjointly with the Hindus, a knowledge of the arts and sciences of the West, failed to make adequate provision for the simple elementary education of one of the most important sections of their Indian subjects. The Hindoos from the beginning had the sympathy of the English. They had primary schools of their own giving instruction in their own vernacular—a language as foreign to the Mahomedan as Urdu is to the Bengalli. The teachers in these schools, in the Lower Provinces, are, with rare exceptions, Hindus of Bengal; their Urdu is always confined to a few words picked up from De Rozario's Dictionary. Under these circumstances the difficulty of the situation for a Mahomedan may be easily imagined.†

The *Maktabas* and the *Madrassas* (scholastic establishments) which existed among the Mahomedans till very lately (and some of which still exist), could easily have been utilised for the purpose of primary education. The Mahomedans would not then have been forced to attend institutions where they are regarded as mere intruders. But our rulers, whilst fully alive to the advantages of elementary education, through the vernacular, for the Hindus, overlooked the very existence of those educational institutions among the Mahomedans.

In Eastern Bengal the vernacular language of the Mussulmans is, as you have seen, closely related to Bengalli. Here then, at least, you will say, they could have made use of the Hindoo institutions. But in their case we meet with another difficulty, not altogether without influence in Behar and Upper Bengal, but having a more powerful and decided influence here—a difficulty which owes its origin to the religious prejudices of the people.

* This passage applies more to the early acquisitions of the E. I. Company like Bengal, Behar, Orissa, and the provinces ceded by the Nawab Vizier.

† Compare Dr. Hunter's work on the Mussulmans.

The circumstances which led to the conversion of the semi-Hindu population of Eastern Bengal, who till then had professed a pseudo-Brahminism on sufferance, made them the most zealous proselytes to the religion of their new masters, who recognised no distinction of race or colour. Far from the humanising influence of the Mogul Court—leading much the life their fathers had led ten centuries before on those small hereditary fields—the people of these parts have retained up to the present moment the religious prejudices—the bigotry—of the old proselytising days—a bigotry which is intensified tenfold by the agrarian feelings of the peasantry against their Hindu middlemen and landlords.* The new system of education, instead of delicately handling their prejudices and making them subservient to the ends of civilisation, either completely ignored or contemned them. These Eastern Mahommedans, though speaking a Bengalli *patois*, are far from willing to accept instruction at the hands of a Bengalli. Besides, they, along with other Mahommedans, consider some degree of religious instruction as absolutely necessary for the proper performance of the duties of private life. In European countries, religion and morality, two convertible terms, are very often kept distinct from the domain of law. But law is nothing more than morality legalised; what you consider right you make legal. But often in Europe, as perhaps often in the East, what is right is not legal, and what is legal is not right.

Even in this country it is oftentimes found necessary to add religious instruction to secular training.

Among the Mahommedans, more than any other people, their laws embody their principles of morality, and are intimately wound up with the everyday duties of their life. Every Mahommedan is required to know something of those duties. In the absence of an established hierarchy like that which the Jews and the Christians possess in common with the Hindoos, all-pervading in its power, every Mahommedan is bound in his person to know something more of his religion than can be acquired by occasional visits to a place of worship.

It is not surprising if, influenced by such ideas, the Mussulman has hitherto abstained from sending his children to institutions where, according to him, they are not only exposed to the unhealthy atmosphere of the companionship of polytheistical youths, but where they are also likely to succumb to the insinuating influences of the rival creed.

In Upper India, where Urdu is the language commonly spoken both by Hindus and Mahommedans, and where the latter do not labour under any peculiar disadvantages, as they do in Bengal, another motive acts conjointly with the religious motive as a deterrent principle—I mean the absence of sufficient moral training. In India, in the Government schools and colleges, the machinery employed for the instruction of youths is unrivalled; but, whilst a small proportion of the large number who take advantage of these educational establishments receive a high mental and moral training, the majority acquire only enough to inspire them with an overweening confidence in themselves and a supercilious contempt for those who do not happen to know the English language. It is not the contempt of knowledge towards ignorance: it is the contempt of shallowness for what it does not understand. Both among Hindus and Mussulmans, those who have thoroughly entered into the spirit of Western civilisation and Western knowledge pay the greatest regard to the literature and civilisation of their own ancestors. The majority of the English-educated youths, however, remain satisfied with a small modicum of knowledge in the shape of English composition and literature. Possessing no acquaintance with the nobler

* The Titu Myan riots, dignified by some people with the name of a religious insurrection, were simply agrarian in their nature—though the feelings of the peasantry might have been aggravated by difference of creed.

parts of Western civilisation, or of their own, their manners remain on a par with their knowledge. Their contempt for everything Indian shows itself in the reckless disregard of the common ordinances of society. Their life becomes a life of mimicry and imitation. The facile Hindoo, a philosopher every inch of him, whilst regretting all this, does not feel the need of renouncing on that account any of the advantages. The old father, representative of an old school, submits with the most praiseworthy philosophy to the supercilious airs of his educated son, and permits himself to be called hard names in the choicest English. There is no cutting off with a shilling out there.

But the proud and sensitive Mahommedan, proud of his historic civilisation and historic refinement, is shocked and disgusted at this result of Western education. In terror and fear, he keeps or takes away his sons from places where, instead of learning the amenities of life under the vaunted auspices of English-educated men, they even forget to pay a decent regard to the requirements of good breeding. Ask any Mahommedan from the North-west, or Behar, why he does not allow his sons the benefits of English education; he will answer by pointing to its general results. Do not for one moment suppose that I mean to reflect upon those gentlemen, Mahommedan or Hindoo, who form the *élite* of the English-educated in our country, and who, from their intellectual acquirements and high moral culture are, an honour to India. I speak of the majority. Everybody cannot receive the highest training; mental acquirements must depend on circumstances; the majority can have but a partial education—something suited to their future prospects in life. The fault is that they receive no moral training with their mental education—a moral training, not on the basis of any particular religion or creed, but on the broad foundations of genuine culture.

Again, throughout Upper India, Behar, and Western Bengal, a knowledge of Persian and Arabic is essential to every Mahommedan with the least pretension to a liberal education. Persian, which may indeed be regarded as the sweetest and softest language in the world, is throughout Mahommedan India, and even among the Hindoos of Upper Hindustan, the language of polite life; its polished, flowing accents add to the charms of a refined circle; its enchanting poets, depreciated only by those who cannot understand the life and beauty within them, are the delight of every Mussulman home. Every gentleman carries on his correspondence in Persian, and has in general to conform to Persian rules of etiquette.

Arabic, besides containing some of the proudest monuments of the human intellect on what are called profane subjects, is, as you know, the sacred language of the Mussulmans. Almost the whole of their religious literature is contained therein. Some knowledge of this language, too, becomes requisite for a gentleman, to obtain for him a proper consideration among his peers. Urdu is his native tongue, and every Mussulman is, *prima facie*, bound to know it. Hence you see the disadvantage under which the Mahommedan labours in competing with the Hindu. In the general absence of any provision in the Government schools for the study of Mussulman learning in conjunction with English—the open sesame to all the goods of life—he is obliged to spend some of the best years of his youth in acquiring a knowledge of Persian and of Arabic.

The Hindu in general cares little for any other language but English. The start he thus gets in beginning, enables him to keep his Mahommedan competitor far behind him in the race of life, as is plainly exemplified in the Indian Civil Service. There is not, to my knowledge, one Mahommedan among the many Indian gentlemen who have entered the service. This is not the result of any innate superiority in the Hindu, for where Mahommedans have had a fair chance they have more than held their own. It is the natural result of the concentration of the young and precocious Hindu mind on *one* subject, whilst the Mussulman is occupied with several.

I have seen young men above twenty sitting side by side with young Hindu boys, studying the English language. The ludicrousness of this sight deters many from entering schools, and I have known cases where because above the limit of age, which in Bengal I believe is 16, they have been refused admission. You will realise the importance attached by Mahomedans to a study of the Persian language by itself, when I tell you that in the Hooghly College, out of some fifty boys, who, in the English classes had no means of learning Persian, twenty-four regularly attended an extra class at an extra hour, when they were fagged after their day's work, and this of their own option.

These are decided evils, requiring decided remedies ; but of the remedies I shall speak later. I must now refer to some other circumstances which have affected the prosperity of the Mussulmans.

The Mahomedan sovereigns and chieftains were, from the earliest times, in the habit of bestowing rent-free lands on individuals and families, either in requital of distinguished services, or as grants for charitable and pious uses. As long as the house of Taimur was powerful enough to exact obedience to its laws, imperial confirmation was essentially requisite to every grant, whether by the local landowners or by the viceroys. But during the times of anarchy which followed the downfall of the Mogul Empire, *sannads* used to be granted directly by the chieftains themselves, and such *sannads*, or deeds of gift, were deemed to vest an effectual and valid title in the grantees. The validity of these titles was—if not openly, at least tacitly—acknowledged by the British Government for about three-quarters of a century. But about and during the time of Lord William Bentinck's administration the Government was seized with a desire to examine the title-deeds and *sannads* of every proprietor and *Jageerdar*, and of every *Wakf* estate. The scene of confusion and terror which ensued is well-described in the graphic pages of Mr. W. Hunter, but the tale of woe should be heard from the lips of those who suffered. Most of the *sannads*, with the imperial confirmations, were lost by the silent inroads of time, or white ants, or destroyed by Mahratta rapine; but there was a prescriptive right to uphold all, sannad or no sannad. The great famine of 1770 had impoverished thousands of Mahomedan families in common with the Hindus. The Cornwallis settlement followed; but it affected only those, who allowed their Hindu farmers to settle with Government officers for the payment of the State revenue, and thus get themselves enrolled as the real proprietors.

The Resumption proceedings, although intended to apply to both races, fell heaviest on the Mussulmans. The Hindus, for the most part, had recent titles, and were thus safe. But every Mahomedan family and every Mahomedan endowment which failed to prove the *sannads* under which they possessed proprietary rights, as gifts from the imperial court of Delhi, were immediately ousted from their possessions. *

Hundreds of princely families who had enjoyed fiefs and estates and *jageers* for years and years were thus completely beggared, or reduced to penurious straits. Some of those who came out of the ordeal unscathed, were devoured by harpies in the shape of Hindu money-lenders. Add to this, reckless hospitality—in the spirit of the old Barmecide,—ostentatiousness in the manner of military conquerors; in fact, extravagance of every sort, combined with the subdivision of property, and it will be apparent why now one large landowner is found in places where half-a-century ago there would have been fifty.

I have not said much about the Mahomedans of Oude, but the causes which led to their decline in that province are too fresh to need comment.

* See the short apologetic account of this measure in Meadows Taylor's "History of India." Even the Nawab Vizier's grants were held invalid.

Among the Mussulmans education is a primary principle of their Code. It is incumbent on every Mahomedan to educate his children, male and female, according to his means. Hence, at the first entry of the British and for many subsequent years, India was covered with educational establishments endowed by sovereigns or by private individuals. These institutions gave instruction in Mussulman learning, at one time the best the world possessed; and even now, if the patristic ~~love~~ ^{loye} which often encrusts it, could be taken off, not lacking in depth, and force, and beauty; not alone sufficient for the exigencies of modern life, but yet necessary for the formation of the national character.

Every gentleman of means and position formerly maintained one or two tutors (as is sometimes the case still); this not only for the instruction of the children of the house, but also for those who liked to avail themselves of their assistance. It is the bounden duty of every Mahomedan, whatever his position, to give instruction to any man who comes to him. If a man were to come to me and ask me to explain to him any book within the scope of my knowledge, and were I to decline without any sufficient reason, I should act in direct contravention of the Mussulman law. *Maktab-khanas*, a sort of primary schools, were attached to every mosque; and *Madrasahs*, institutions of a higher class, were numerous.* A wise Government, animated with a desire of justice towards all its subjects, a desire of promoting the public weal and private happiness of all its people, without distinction of race, creed, or colour, would at once have seized on these ready-to-hand institutions, immediately purified them of all their corruptions, and, whilst keeping up a shadow of their old teaching, would have made them the vehicles of its own ideas and a grand machinery for ruling the nation by the teachers of its youth; it would have struck at the core of all bigoted feelings (where there existed any) by enrolling the sympathies and the interest of the ordinary *moolla*; it would have bound up English with Mussulman learning; and, in doing all this, would have thrown the whole responsibility on those very Mahomedans, by entrusting the management and supervision of these primary institutions—say, under British guidance—to committees of men selected from their race.

But the British Government was too busy at the time. Its action often was more cruel than its indifference. The Inam Commission dealt a blow to these indigenous institutions, from which they will never recover. Only under the enlightened policy of our present high-minded Viceroy is it that the Government is becoming aware of the mistake it then committed.

Whilst British officers were trying to utilise Hindoo *Patshalas*, whilst they were trying to establish normal schools, and training schools, and schools of all sorts for the Hindoos, they allowed the Mahomedan institutions to die off by the decline of their private supporters, or the resumption of the endowments to which they appertained. Looking at these facts can it be said that the Government of those days did not fail in its duty, towards us?

The truth is, that for the rough-and-ready way of civilising India which was then in vogue, the Mahomedans were found to be rather an unmalleable material; the stamping-out system which answered with the Hindus did not succeed with the Mahomedans. They were therefore left to take care of themselves. The nation which prizes independence of character so much in itself ought to have appreciated it in others, and seen the real worth lying beneath the hard surface of the material. It ill becomes a Teutonic race to place a pliant and flexible nature before one of which the prominent characteristics are pride and sturdiness.

* Even at the time of Dr. Buchanan's survey many of these *Maktabs* were existing, attached to religious endowments.

The Christian missionaries, the first pioneers among the Hindus of European learning—whose character as the disciples of the great Teacher of Christianity ought to have preserved them from unworthy prejudices—actuated by the rivalry of creeds, were the noisiest in the reprobation of the Mahomedans and of Mahomedan institutions. They, who ought to have helped us in keeping alive our old educational and scholastic establishments as the germs of our regeneration, and the means of imparting Western knowledge, were only too glad to see their decline. The legacy of hatred bequeathed by the unholy wars of 600 years ago in Western Asia still bears fruit in the European mind.

However, from some of the recent resolutions of the Government of India, it appears that British officials are at last becoming alive to the desirability of warding off the complete extinction of Mussulman learning from among the Indian Mahomedans. And it is to be hoped that the Government would immediately set itself to work in utilising the wrecks of the old Mussulmanic educational establishments for purposes of primary and preparatory education to the Mahomedans.

The Mahomedans themselves are awakening to the necessity of making an effort to save their community from utter decadence. The Mussulmans of the North-west, as represented by their presiding genius, Syed Ahmed Khan Bahadoor, are trying to find out the real causes lying at the root of all the evils at present afflicting the Mahomedan community. Prizes have been set apart for the best Urdu essays on the subject.

In Behar and Bengal also, the Mussulmans have become sensible of the difficulties of the situation. In Calcutta and Behar—the two centres of thought among the Mahomedans of these parts—the influential people are not only willing and ready to assist Government in its work of amelioration among the Mussulman masses, but are themselves endeavouring to improve the condition of the nation at large. The two Mahomedan societies at these places have entered heart and soul into the work of reform and improvement. In Upper India measures are being taken to establish a cheap daily paper for the people to be sold at railway stations by sweetmeat-sellers throughout the Urdu-speaking districts, from Bhagulpoor, in Bengal, far up to the Punjab. This proposed newspaper, I am told, is not intended to be the organ of any particular race, but rather of the whole of the Urdu-speaking people, both Hindoo and Mahomedan.

The "Mahomedan Social Reformer," published at Allygarh, represents to a great extent the new ideas which are in action among us. There is every sign, there is every hope, that we have now reached the turning point of the crisis in our social existence; once safely through this stage, we shall not be behind any nation in the march of progress. But the present is the moment when assistance, direct and indirect, is most needed from an impartial Government to enable us to renovate our national and social life. In asking for and expecting so much, we do not mean that the British should deal unfairly with any other of the subject races. The British, in their capacity of peace-makers in India, can afford to be just and fair towards all. We do not wish to see the Hindoos thrust out from all educational institutions. We do not desire a monopoly of State patronage; we do not wish that the Government schools and colleges should dispense Mahomedan learning only, to the exclusion of Western knowledge and literature; we do not ask that the money taken from the Hindoos should be spent on us. It would be unfortunate indeed if any Mahomedan ever wished for all or any of these things. What we want is, that the British in India should observe the strictest impartiality between the various races of the Empire.

The October number of the "Cornhill Magazine," in an anti-Mahomedan article, said, "that our chief grievance lies in the policy of indifference

and non-intervention which the British hold in their dealings with the Indian races." No Government can well be indifferent to the political, social, or moral welfare of any section of its subjects, much less of a mighty proportion, amounting at the lowest estimate to some thirty millions. It may be indifferent to their religious customs, but not to their social or moral concerns. And hence it is that the British Government has established schools, more or less assisted by imperial aids, for the proper education of its Hindoo subjects in Western learning and their own language and literature. The Mahomedans want the same. We require assistance in transforming our old scholastic establishments, wherever these may be found existing, into primary and preparatory schools where the English language will be taught in conjunction with our own. And when necessary, we expect the same assistance in the formation of new ones ; but where separate establishments are not needed, we require that Mussulman teachers should be attached to the Hindoo institutions for instructing Mussulman youths in their vernacular and Persian. We also require training institutions for teachers speaking our own language, we require that a fair proportion of the money we pay unto the State should be applied towards our education and social amelioration. Above all, we require the funds of Mahomedan endowments to be utilised for the education of Mahomedans ; and when they enter the Government schools and colleges we expect that they should be placed on an equal footing with their Hindoo fellow-subjects. At present the principle of exclusion is so powerful, that while the representatives of other races make use of Mahomedan endowments and enjoy Mahomedan scholarships, the Mahomedans in the Calcutta Presidency College itself, I am told, are debarred from holding a graduate scholarship.

The movement for Western education at present going on among the majority of Indian Mahomedans is combined with a desire for cutting off the excrescences which have gathered on their simple religious system from ages of contact with the various races of the Empire. The Mussulmans, in the effort to elevate the subject nations, degraded themselves ; they paid the penalty exacted by an avenging Nemesis, by adopting many of the superstitious customs and observances of the Hindoos ; most of the Hindoo converts retained all their old associations, all their old habits of thought, and handed them down to their descendants, like the Western barbarians who continued to worship Odin and Freya under the names and symbols of Christ and the Virgin.

The Mahomedans of India, as you are aware, are divided into two great sects—the Soonnites and the Shiites ; these again are divided into many sub-sections. The two principal sects differ from each other on many doctrinal as well as historical points. But the feeling is universal amongst educated Mahomedans, whether belonging to the one or the other sect, that primary secular education should include some moral and religious training, and that Islam, shaking off the mass of superstitions which have become attached to it, should revert to its original purity. In the present state of society among the Mahomedans themselves, the practical application of the former principle is not unattended with difficulties. But I may remark that the addition of a few chapters of the Koran to the curriculum of studies (say, in the primary schools), with some general ethical treatises, without any intermixture of sectarian or dogmatic theology, would go far towards conciliating the religious prejudices of the Mussulmans of all sects.

The idea of a reform is grand in its nature, and deserves the attention and appreciation of the people whose forefathers originated the Teutonic revolt in the Latin Church. As among the Christians, this phase of thought in the Mussulman world to all appearances leads and will lead to a rigid, uncompromising literalism in one direction, and a noble rationalism in the other.

Some recent occurrences, which, on account of their political character, I am debarred from discussing here, have strengthened the old English notion that Islam is a religion of aggression, and that, such being the case, a Mahommedan *renaissance* must mean the manifestation of a principle of war.*

More utterly mistaken ideas cannot exist. Every religion, in some stage of its career, has been aggressive. Biassed as people are by the prejudices of thirteen centuries, it may surprise many to hear that Islam is essentially a religion of peace. To take one example. There is nothing in Islam which is not compatible with the most absolute loyalty to a *de facto* sovereign of whatever creed. Islam makes it the duty of every Moslem, when once he has accepted the protection of a non-Mahommedan sovereign—when once he has taken up the status of a *Mustameen*—to repay by absolute loyalty the protection he enjoys; he is bound to assist the sovereign against the public enemies, and to observe the municipal laws of the State equally with them. It is only in cases of extreme religious persecution and civil ostracism that the Mussulmans are allowed to have recourse to arms. If a Government were to prevent its Mahommedan subjects from observing the ordinances of their religion; or if it were to forbid them to obey the call to prayer, or attendance at mosques; or were to interfere with the quiet enjoyment of private rights and privileges according to the Moslem code; or if it allowed people of other faiths to maltreat Mahommedans whilst proceeding to their places of worship, or to insult such places, &c., then—and even then only with a reasonable hope of success—are they permitted to take up arms against the *de facto* Government. But if there is no reasonable hope of success, the Moslems must migrate. The Moriscoes of Spain furnish an example. They were richer and wealthier than the Indian Mussulmans, and certainly not their inferior in warlike prowess; but when they found that the fanaticism of the bigot of the Escorial and his minister made it difficult for them to live in Spain in the due observance of their religious usages, they, instead of claiming those rights, arms in hand, or trying to regain their supremacy, migrated in a body to Africa, and Spain lost for ever her element of vitality.

The Indian Mahommedans are in the full enjoyment of their religious rights (though a few cases to the contrary have been known); their mosques are open; no one interferes with their calls to prayer; they observe their religious ordinances without the least hindrance. What incentive can they have to rise in arms or abet a conspiracy against the British? If a Mussulman were to do so, he would act in direct contravention of his religion.

As a social subject of the character under review is apt to be misapprehended for a political matter, I must not enter into further details. But I must claim your indulgence with regard to one point. A small, unimportant sect in Lower Bengal—recruited for the most part from the ranks of common menial servants, butchers, boatmen, &c., and officered by ill-read bigots, with no lawful careers in life under the British Government—has brought itself of late years into the most unfortunate prominence. The unanimous opinion of the respectable portion of the Mussulman community, the authoritative dicta of four distinct bodies of Moslem jurists,† have condemned the proceedings of this ill-starred body of zealots as iniquitous and contrary to the laws of the Great Prophet. It is most unfortunate, and likely to lead to the most disastrous consequences, that

* I do not allude to the tragical fate of Chief Justice Norman, whatever pain and sorrow I may feel at the loss of one who was not only a personal friend, but also one of the best well-wishers of our community. An individual crime, abhorred by all classes of people, has no connection with social or national questions.

† I allude to the late Fatewas, whose nature has been so much misunderstood by the English people in general.

the English should so far lose their sense of justice as to allow themselves to be prejudiced against the whole nation, on account of the misdeeds of a few individuals. Dissatisfaction with particular measures of Government is very different from disaffection. Both phases of political feeling exist in the very midst of you ; you can differentiate between the two.

I earnestly pray you, therefore, to deal with us more justly and fairly in the future ; you can scarcely imagine the pain one reckless word spoken by Englishmen causes to that mass of loyal men whose staunch faithfulness has stood the test of more than a hundred years, and difficulties of no uncommon magnitude, and whom, now, in a moment of panic, or under the influence of unworthy passions, the English class together under the head of malcontents and irreconcilables.

With regard to the status of woman among the Mahommedans, very curious and entertaining notions are held in England. It is thought that they are prisoners in dungeons ; it is thought that they are no better than slaves ; that whenever the master of the house gets into a passion, he invariably puts them into a sack and throws them into the sea (however, as there is no sea in India, this must be meant metaphorically) ; it is thought that without rights, without privileges, without education, they drag on a miserable existence, unrelieved by a single ray of light. I wonder what our ladies would say to all this !

Women among the Mahommedans possess exactly the same privileges and rights as the men ; there is no law of "coverture" and "merger" among them ; marriage gives no right to the man which it does not give to the woman.

Marriage among the Mahommedans is essentially a civil contract ; acceptance and consent form the basis of a Mahommedan marriage ; and though in India some Hindu ceremonies are gone through after the deed of marriage has been drawn up and attested, the principle always remains the same. The man is asked whether he accepts the woman as his wife ; he answers in the affirmative ; the woman is asked whether she accepts him as her husband ; she answers "Yes ;" then follow the usual phrases about honour and love. A deed is drawn up by a qualified person in Mahommedan law and duly attested.

In Upper India and Behar, and among the Hindustani Mahommedans in Bengal, men scarcely ever marry under twenty, women never under fifteen or sixteen. But very often men are beyond thirty and women above twenty before they think of marriage. Among the Bengalli Mahommedans early marriages are rather frequent, in imitation of the Bengalli Hindus.

A Mahommedan wife among the lower classes is, from what I have seen and heard in England, decidedly not less happy than a married woman among the lower classes of the English. Among the upper classes, the ladies, though they do not possess the culture and the luxuries of Paris and of London, certainly do not lead the life you mark out for them in your imagination. They rule despotically within their own homes. The husband and the father have to bow to their authority, and though they do not appear among men, their influence does not remain confined within the four walls of the house ; it extends throughout the whole circle of their husband's or father's acquaintances.

Invitations and presents are always sent to the lady of the house, and are sent by the friend's wife, or, in her absence, the eldest female relative. Often, after the mother's death, the eldest daughter, married or unmarried, becomes the centre of home-life. The old English notion of women possessing no souls according to the Moslem creed is, I believe, exploded by this time ; but Westerns generally are still under the impression that Mahommedanism promotes polygamy, or, more properly speaking, polygyny. Nothing better exemplifies the mischievous results of a want of proper information.

Among the pre-Islamite Arabs the condition of woman was extremely wretched and miserable. Polygamy prevailed to an extent simply inconceivable. There were no recognised laws of marriage. The general licentiousness of manners in the surrounding countries about the Prophet's time was, beyond measure, frightful. The amelioration effected in the condition of women by the Mahommedan laws is alone sufficient to stamp Islam as one of the noblest institutions in the universe. By the laws of the Prophet, a man can have four wives provided he can do "justice" among them, that is, treat them with equal regard and affection; otherwise he shall have but one. This simple law, whilst providing for the condition of society in those times, is an indirect but effective prohibition of polygamy. In those days, and even now, the general absence of all provision in Eastern countries, by which women are enabled to procure a livelihood for themselves, served to make polygamy a principle of self-preservation on their part. The law of the Prophet kept in view this fact, whilst doing away with polygamy as an institution. In the present circumstances of the world the prohibitory clause becomes the legal principle of action.

In India, it is only a few of the rich who can afford to have the luxury of several establishments that have more wives than one. Polygamy, as an institution, is fast disappearing under the new light in which the laws of the Prophet are being read. The majority even now disapprove of it; and I may say, on the authority of the "Mahommedan Social Reformer" of September last, that 95 Mahommedans out of every 100 are perfect monogamists.

A Bengalli gentleman, in an address delivered at Birmingham, spoke of us with much asperity. Referring to the result of the Mahommedan conquest on Hindu women, he said (I quote his words as given in the Association's journal): "Their women, who had full liberty during the ancient period, and had received education as in other civilised countries, were deprived of their liberty, the men being obliged to keep their wives and sisters for safety confined to the house." If the Mahommedans had ever been guilty of the deeds the Baboo insinuates, there was no lack of men among the Hindus of the North-west, at any rate, to enact an Eastern Sicilian Vespers.

I do not know, however, whether the Hindu women, prior to the Mahommedan conquest, used or not to come out in public. Possibly they might have done this and more besides. But I once fell in with the translation of a passage from Munnoo which goes directly against the assertions of Bengalli gentlemen of the present day. It runs thus:—"Women," says Munnoo, "love their beds, their seats, their ornaments; they have impure appetites, they love wrath, they show weak flexibility and bad conduct. Day and night women must be kept in subjection."* Munnoo, I must remind those who have not heard of him, was not a Mahommedan; he was a good old Hindoo of the good olden times, when, if we are to believe Bengalli gentlemen, Hindu women used to be worshipped by their lords.

However that might be, the Mahommedans distinctly deny the questionable honour of introducing what you call the Zenana system in India. The Mahommedans had no knowledge of this custom till they entered India. In all Mahommedan countries women appear in public, though with veils; in the Ealyats of Persia, in Kashgaria, in Turkish Bosnia, and various other parts they even dispense with them.†

An explanation of the term *zenana*, and what is supposed to be its

* Tytler's "Considerations on the State of India," vol. i., p. 237.

† Compare "Malcolm's Sketches," "Frontier Lands of the Christian and the Turk," "The Travels of Ibn-Batuta," &c.

Turkish equivalent, *Harem*, will further elucidate the subject. Zenana is a Persian word, signifying women-folk, and, in its secondary acceptation, anything or any place peculiarly belonging to women. The term *Harem* is an Arabic word, and means a sacred place, interdicted to all vulgar access ; and as ladies' apartments are in our eyes sacred as any sanctuary or shrine (and English ladies will, I am sure, appreciate this feeling) we naturally style them *Harem*. Now, in these terms I do not see anything to show that the Mahommedans introduced the custom of utter seclusion into India ; perhaps they prove, on the contrary, that the Mussulmans introduced a nobler conception of women among the nation whose gods took pride in degrading the sex. If the custom did not exist in India before the Conquest, and if the Mahommedans did not adopt it from the Hindoos, it must have resulted from the exclusiveness of the conquering race and its wish to remain separate from the conquered. The exclusive habits of the English in India make the conduct of the Mahommedans intelligible. The Austrians in Lombardy afford another example of this principle. Yet, notwithstanding the beneficial influences to which the Mussulmans were exposed, they always allowed their women ampler privileges than exist now in some parts of Europe.

The education of women is as obligatory upon Mahommedans as that of men. And hence it is that from the time of Razia Begum, the daughter of the second Affghan King of Delbi, down to her late Highness, Nawab Secundra Begum, of Bhopal, and her noble and gifted daughter, there has been no lack of ladies of talent and acquirements.*

The machinery of female education among us is interesting in more respects than one. Among the better classes, it is customary to have one or two *Atocs*, or governesses, in the house.

These *Atocs* are invariably well-born, belonging to old decayed families, and obliged by circumstances to procure a livelihood for themselves by private teaching. They are, as a general rule, good Arabic and Persian scholars. They not only teach the daughters of the house, but dispense instruction to the girls of the neighbourhood *gratis*, and with the free permission of the mistress. In Upper India, the course of study includes higher branches of learning than in Behar and Upper Bengal ; in Arabic, I am informed, the ladies often going as far as the *Hedaya*, a profitless work on jurisprudence. But the general curriculum in Persian includes history, poetry, some ethical treatises, and a little arithmetic, and composition ; in Arabic, grammar, reading and construing partially the Koran. In some places the course goes beyond this ; in others it falls short of it.

The education of the poorer classes is always confined to reading a few chapters of the Koran, joined to a little Urdu.

Sewing, embroidery, and other branches of needlework, are considered necessary accomplishments to a lady's education ; and among the upper classes the daughters are, with rare exceptions, well-taught in these arts. Here, again, the girls of the poorer neighbours receive the benefit of that charity which Islam inculcates among its professors, and learn as much of sewing and needlework as the cares of a poor household would allow.

In Upper India and in some parts of Behar, music and also singing are often taught ; but these are not considered so requisite as ladies' accomplishments as in Europe. A desire, however, for these ennobling arts is spreading rapidly among the Mahommedans.

Another necessary point in a lady's education is the superintendence of the kitchen. You will recall to mind the story of the cream tarts in the "Arabian Nights;" the fair Indian descendants of those Arab ladies have

* The daughter of the Prophet was one of the most accomplished ladies the world has seen. In India, the daughters of Shah Jahan and of Aurungezebe were remarkable for their political abilities.

not allowed the art of cookery to deteriorate. For myself, I consider the cultivation of the gastronomic art one of the great tests of a nation's progress; and it might possibly be an advantage (socially speaking) if a proper teaching of this branch of learning could be given to the Hindoos of the Lower Provinces, who are behind every other civilised nation in this respect.

English education, with but few exceptions, has made no way amongst Mahommedan ladies. The creation of a desire is necessary to the proper appreciation of any object; and the desire or taste is engendered only by the want or need of that object. Our ladies do not as yet feel the necessity of learning the English language or literature. English ladies in no way interest themselves in their behalf; they do not visit them, they do not care for them. What object, then, have our ladies in learning their language? If they can live in their dignity, we can live in ours; if they will hedge themselves in their divinity, we have only to follow their example. This is not my argument, this is the argument which our ladies adduce. I would, on the contrary, have every Mussulman girl taught some of the languages and literature of the West.

If English ladies had come forward and mixed with Mahommedan ladies, if they had set down on their visiting lists the names of some respectable Mussulman families, and had spared time to see and talk with their wives and daughters, they would have done far more to accelerate the work of social reform, to rivet the bonds of affection, than a whole mass of legislation.

These ladies would at first have found some difficulty in the want of common topics of conversation and in the difference of habits and tastes; but before the novelty had worn off, all these difficulties would have been smoothed by the creation of common subjects of interest. But English ladies must not enter our families with the patronising tone and manner which is considered the orthodox way of improving a people. They must converse with our ladies just as they would with their country-women and equals. There may be some difference in the *minutiae* of etiquette; but in the natural ease and elegance of manners, in the frank simplicity and unaffectedness which stamp a lady everywhere, they will not find our women inferior to many European nations.

It could be wished that English ladies in India would follow the example of Madame MacMahon in Algeria, who, whilst studiously respecting the customs of Algerian ladies, tried to impart to them a knowledge of European life.*

Conversaciones, at which English, Mahommedan, and Hindoo ladies could meet and exchange friendly courtesies, would not only bring the English and the Mahommedan together, but would remove the race-prejudices which the Bengalli Hindoo often entertains towards the Mussulman.

Men must at present be excluded from such *conversaciones*; and though this may appear unnecessary to English ladies, a sense of duty in the cause which their husbands, and fathers, and brothers profess to promote will afford the motive; and something of the charm of simplicity, combined with frankness, might make the meetings not altogether tedious and devoid of interest.

Though there is no difficulty in English ladies visiting Mahommedan ladies, except such as exists on their own part, at first they will find it decidedly difficult to persuade our ladies to visit them. But better knowledge of each other would make them feel sure that they will be secure from offensive intrusions during their calls.

In this way, English ladies would do incalculable good, the beneficial

* During the Marshal's Governor-Generalship.

effects of which will not remain confined to one class ; it will gradually make its way from the upper to the lower strata, and the whole mass of society will be vivified with new life.

Mahommedan gentlemen have decided objections to allowing their daughters to attend schools with girls of other races, often of the lowest class ; and the lower classes of Mussulmans are deterred by motives of creed and difference of language. Many gentlemen now wish to avail themselves of English governesses, but are prevented by the difficulty in obtaining them, fear as to any tampering with the religious ideas of their daughters (a sort of feeling akin to what Protestants entertain towards Roman Catholic governesses), and such like. The corresponding members of this Association might do well to try to set these matters in a proper light.

In the meantime Government can give an extra impetus to the movement for education now going on among the Mahommedans, by attaching cheap primary girls' schools for the poor classes of Mussulmans to the existing endowments, as at Hooghly, Jessore, and other places in Bengal, Behar, and the North-west. The Itimad-ud-Dowla Fund in Punjab—a purely Mahommedan endowment—could be utilised for the same and cognate purposes.

I fear I have trespassed too long upon your attention, but the importance of the subject would not admit of any curtailment. And though I am aware I have neither treated it exhaustively nor in the way it really deserved, and have, in one or two places, been obliged to go over the same grounds as some English writers, I hope I have succeeded in throwing some new light upon the social condition of the Mussulmans of India, and in creating some interest in their favour among you.

But before I conclude, let me add that those who have really the good of India at heart—alike Hindoo, Mahommedan, and English—should forget their national prejudices and race-antagonisms in that one object.

"United India" should be the watchword of future progress.

ASSOCIATION
IN AID OF
SOCIAL PROGRESS IN INDIA.
LONDON BRANCH.

ESTABLISHED 1871.

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I. The object of this Association is to assist the movements towards social improvement now taking place in India.

II. Although the social progress of two hundred millions of people is an object of such vast dimensions that it may appear at first sight to be utterly beyond the scope of any association of individuals to aid it, yet it must be remembered that movements of this nature generally commence with isolated efforts, widening by degrees till they embrace in their sphere of action whole communities of people.

III. The Committee are in possession of evidence that such movements have already begun, and that not from one, but from several indigenous centres in different parts of India. These efforts are clearly capable of being

materially assisted by the action of an Association like that for which they now venture to solicit public support.

IV. It would, however, be difficult to obtain adequate support in aid of an object of this kind without a more general knowledge than is commonly met with in this country of the social condition of India, and of the attempts that are being made there towards improvement. One of the main objects, therefore, of this Association will be to impart information by means of lectures, conversaziones, correspondence, and intercourse with the natives of India, and by the Journal of the Association.*

V. The objects of the Association, therefore, are the following :—

1. To impart information with the view of awakening general interest in this country in the social condition of the people of India.
2. To assist the movements now in progress in various parts of India towards general social improvement, and especially at present in respect to female education, the encouragement of schools of arts and industry, and friendly intercourse between the English and the Indian races.
3. To obtain information from all parts of India where efforts are being made in furtherance of any of these objects, by means of correspondence with leaders of thought and with reformers who are at present labouring, under enormous difficulties, in a field of unlimited extent.
4. To encourage as much as possible natives of India to visit England, and to assist those who do come to this country, by facilitating their introduction to English families, and affording them the means of becoming better acquainted, than they otherwise could be, with the domestic life of English people; so that they may acquire a taste for the habits and pursuits of refined society, and have opportunities of studying to the best advantage English ideas, institutions, and customs.

VI. As the main purport of the Association is to effect its objects by co-operation and intercourse between people differing in race and creed, it is obvious that, for all purposes coming within the scope of the Society's operations, the common ground of absolute neutrality, in regard to religion, is the only position that can be occupied.

VII. One branch of the Association already exists at Bristol, and another at Edinburgh; and it is hoped that, in course of time, branches will be established in other large cities.

VIII. The subscription to the Association is Ten Shillings and upwards per annum, which will entitle the Subscriber to all the privileges of membership. Associate Members, subscribing Five Shillings per annum will be entitled to admission to lectures, the Monthly Journal, and other privileges, except the right of voting.

IX. The names of Subscribers, Donations, and Subscriptions, to be sent to either of the Honorary Secretaries, Miss E. A. MANNING, 35, Blomfield-road, W., or Rev. T. HUNTER, 8, Queen-square, W.C.

* The Journal is at present published monthly at Bristol, and may be had on application to Miss CARPENTER, Red Lodge House, in that city.

L'INDE

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ORDRE ET PROGRÈS

L'INDE

PAR

RICHARD CONGRÈVE

AUTEUR DE « GIBRALTAR, OU LA POLITIQUE EXTÉRIEURE DE L'ANGLETERRE. »

◁○▷

TRADUIT DE L'ANGLAIS.

◁○▷

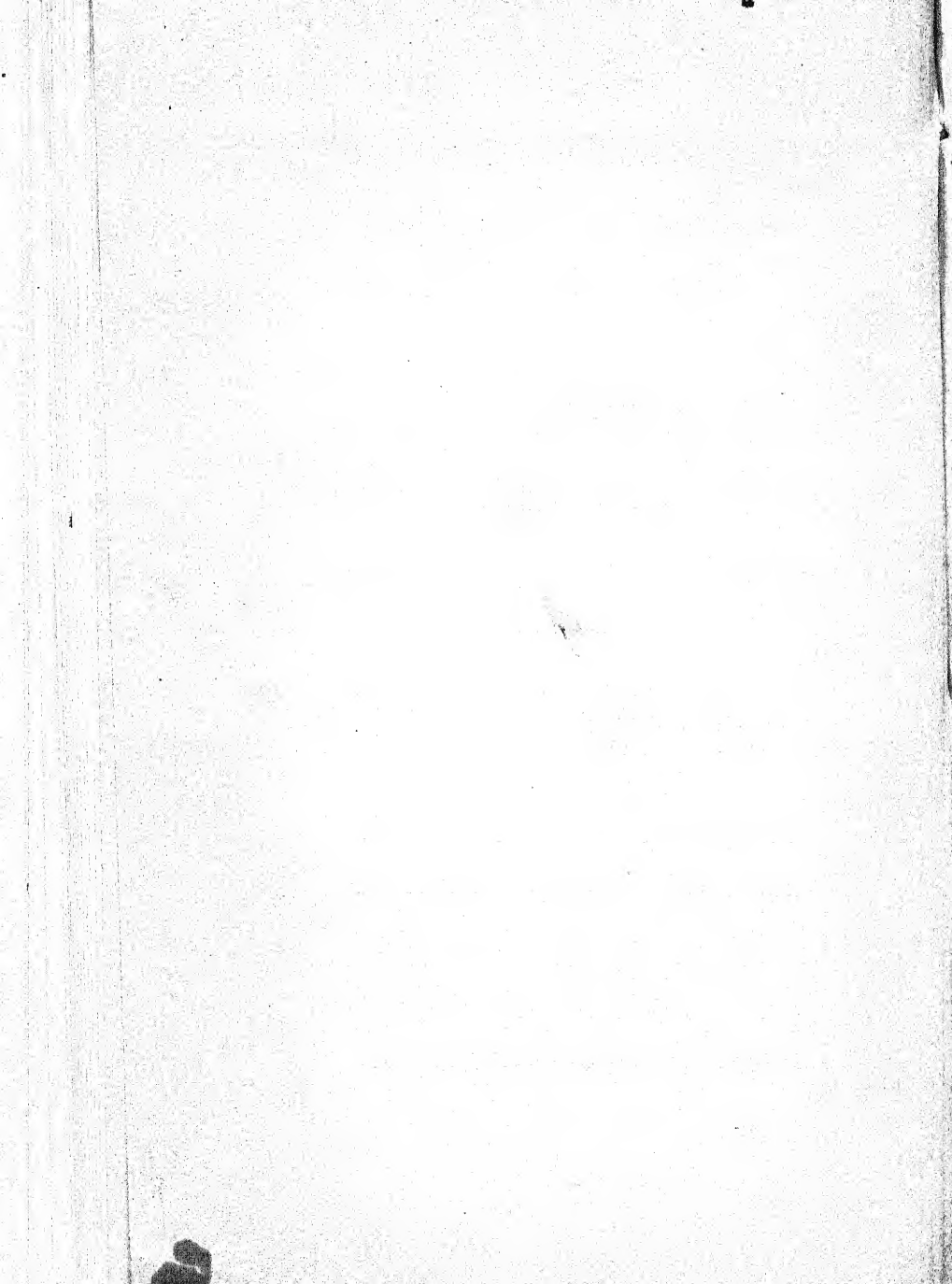
« Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra.
« Do thy duty, come what may. »
OLD KNIGHTLY MOTTO.

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—
1858



PRÉFACE



Ma précédente brochure sur Gibraltar (1)
fut entreprise à la suggestion d'Auguste Comte

(1) Gibraltar, or foreign Policy of England. London,
John Chapman, King William's street, Strand, 1856.

et écrite avec son approbation. Le présent opuscule (1) paraît dans des circonstances bien différentes : car je suis réduit à déplorer, avec tous ses disciples, la perte de ce guide et maître. C'est dans l'assurance que ce dont il me dissuadait l'an dernier lui paraîtrait opportun cette année, que j'entreprends ce nouveau travail. Je l'offre comme un tribut à sa mémoire, comme un gage que le noble exemple de son dévouement à la cause de l'Humanité ne saurait être perdu. Sa voix ne peut plus se faire entendre, mais son esprit vit en nous ; et l'énergie croissante de notre action mutuelle montrera, je l'espère, que ses disciples sont

(1) India. London, John Chapmann, 1857.

résolus à poursuivre son œuvre. Je l'offre encore comme une preuve de sympathie à tous ceux qui partagent ma foi. Je le mets enfin au service de l'Humanité.

Il faut payer de sa personne. Quand j'attaque aussi ouvertement, je ne songe pas à m'abriter. Je ne me fais pas non plus illusion sur l'accueil réservé aux opinions que ces pages renferment. Cependant, je n'ai pas écrit avec mépris pour les idées qui sont encore en vigueur dans ce pays, ni dans un esprit d'opposition frondeuse envers le sentiment de la majorité.

« Io parlo per ver dire,

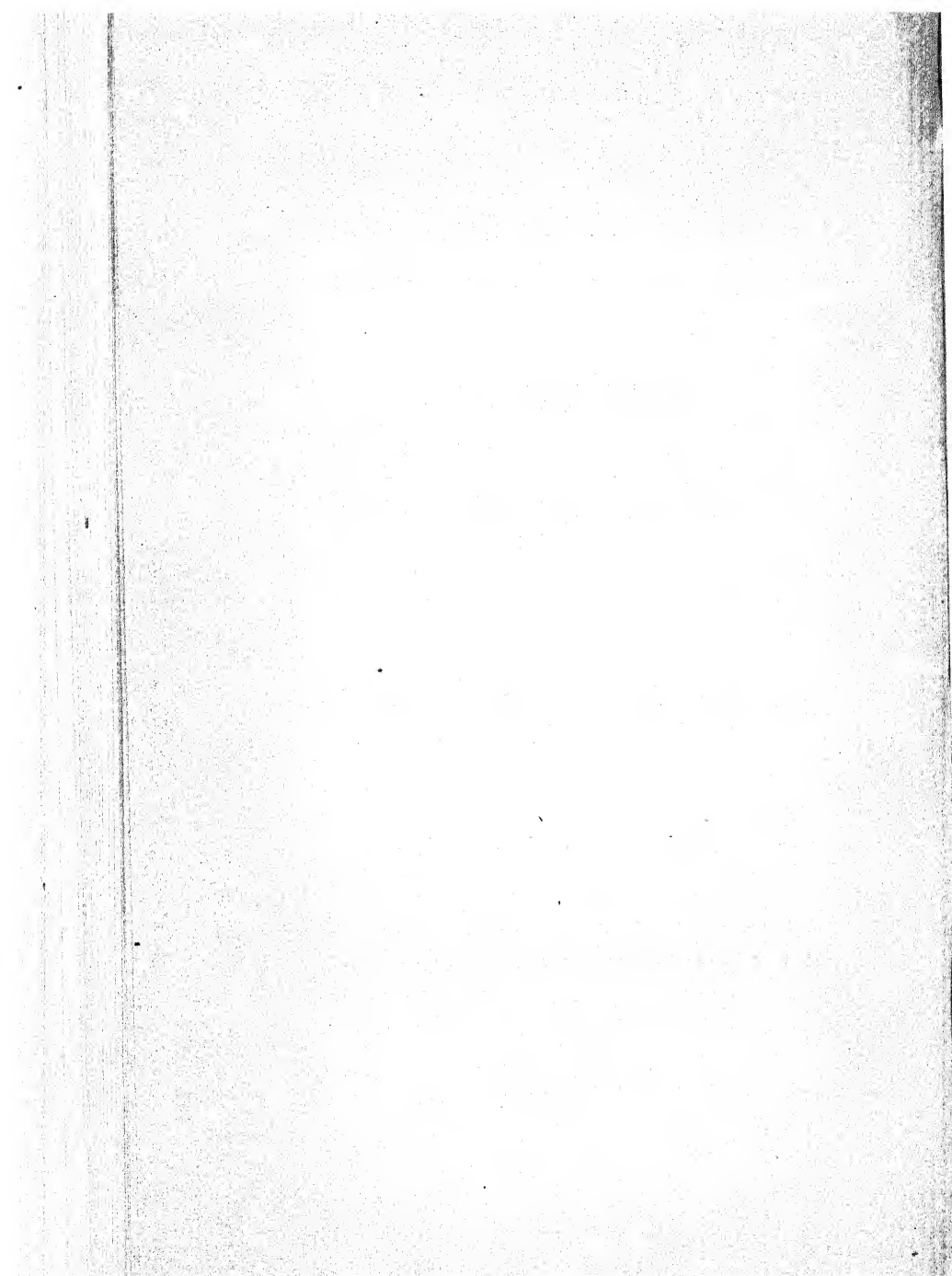
» Non per odio d'altrui, nè per disprezzo. »

Je demanderais volontiers aux lecteurs impartiaux de me juger d'après l'épigraphe de ma première page, qui rend l'esprit dans lequel ce travail a été conçu. Car, je crois que le temps est venu de proclamer hautement les enseignements du Positivisme, et de produire au grand jour, sans hésitation comme sans réticence, les solutions morales fournies par ce système aux grandes questions qui agitent la société tout entière. Je ne décline pas le périlleux honneur de l'avant-garde.

Il ne s'agit point ici d'exposer les bases dogmatiques ni le système religieux qui constitue le Positivisme ; je dois me renfermer, comme pour *Gibraltar*, dans l'application de ses principes à un cas spécial. C'est à ce point de vue

que mon travail doit être jugé, pour qu'on puisse apprécier convenablement les motifs qui m'ont amené à y introduire des formules qui, au premier abord, sembleraient étrangères à mon raisonnement; d'autre part, quelques personnes trouveront que j'ai heurté sans nécessité les croyances actuellement existantes. Cependant je n'ai dit de la religion que ce qui était indispensable à mon sujet. L'élaboration consciencieuse de ses propres opinions sur de semblables questions entraîne une disposition d'esprit peu propre à choquer ou irriter autrui. Cet effort donne le courage de s'exprimer ouvertement, et doit inspirer en même temps le respect et la sympathie.

South-fields, Wandsworth, 9 novembre 1857.



INTRODUCTION

DES
OPINIONS ACTUELLES SUR LES RELATIONS DE L'OCCIDENT,
AVEC LE RESTE DE LA TERRE.

La question de l'insurrection de l'Inde a vivement attiré et préoccupé l'attention, non-seulement de l'Angleterre, mais aussi de l'Occident tout entier.

Un positiviste anglais, aussi énergique que dé-

voué, M. Richard Congrève, a appliqué les principes de la nouvelle doctrine à l'appréciation de cet important événement. Au milieu de la violente effervescence qu'a produite en Angleterre la révolution hindoue, il n'a pas craint de proclamer hautement la prépondérance de la morale sur la politique. Un tel acte honore sans doute celui qui a su en prendre la ferme initiative, mais il indique aussi la véritable estime que mérite la forte population à laquelle on ne craint pas de dire et de proclamer la vérité, alors même qu'elle choque de longues habitudes et d'intimes susceptibilités. Et, comme l'a dit si justement M. Congrève, en parlant du peuple anglais : « je suis persuadé qu'il écoutera tout appel fait à ses sentiments élevés. La nation qui a produit Milton, Cromwell, et les soldats de Cromwell comprendra toujours ce qu'il peut y avoir de noble, de grand et de désintéressé dans une action. »

Mais la question de l'Inde n'est qu'un cas particulier d'une question plus générale : celle des relations des peuples occidentaux avec le reste de la terre. Ces relations ont été abandonnées jusqu'ici à une activité désordonnée. Chaque peuple de

l'Europe occidentale s'est trouvé placé dans une situation plus ou moins analogue à celle de l'Angleterre ; et l'on peut dire que nous avons tous notre *question de l'Inde*. M. Congrève a dû surtout porter son attention sur la question spéciale, mais d'une si haute importance, qu'il avait entrepris de traiter. C'est pour cela que je crois convenable, pour le public français, d'indiquer d'une manière sommaire, mais distincte, les principes fondamentaux d'après lesquels la doctrine positive apprécie et juge les rapports des peuples entre eux, et surtout ceux des populations avancées avec celles qui le sont relativement moins. Un rapide aperçu de l'état des opinions actuelles sur ce sujet montrera l'urgence de faire prévaloir enfin des principes fixes d'appréciation, dans des questions livrées au plus grand désordre, et où prévalent nécessairement d'assez basses inspirations.

Laissons de côté, pour le moment, l'Angleterre, plus spécialement intéressée dans la question, et voyons comment, en France, se partagent les opinions sur ce sujet, et en général sur la nature des relations de l'Occident avec les autres peuples

de la terre. Il y a plus d'un enseignement à tirer de cet examen.

Nous avons vu l'école rétrograde, du moins en France, prendre intérêt à la population hindoue. Nous avons vu les journaux appartenant aux diverses nuances de ce parti faire ressortir avec beaucoup de justesse et de vérité ce qu'avaient d'odieus les procédés de répression employés par l'Angleterre, d'exagéré les récits des atrocités des indigènes, et combien était au fond légitime l'insurrection d'un peuple, protestant contre une domination étrangère, oppressive et hautaine.

Mais, sans suspecter nullement la sincérité de telles opinions, il est permis de croire qu'une sorte de répulsion pour l'Angleterre elle-même a involontairement contribué à développer cette sympathie pour la population hindoue.

Et en effet, nous voyons les même gens approuver et sanctionner, dans d'autres cas, une conduite et une domination fort analogues à celle de l'Angleterre dans l'Inde. Il y a plus, ils sont bien loin souvent de protester contre l'oppression beaucoup

plus grave encore, d'une partie de l'Occident par une autre.

Il y a donc au fond inconséquence et indécision, dans les opinions de l'école rétrograde, sur les rapports entre l'Occident et le reste de notre planète.

Et, en définitive, l'on peut dire, que la doctrine théologique (catholique, ou protestante dans toutes ses nuances quelconques) n'a pu, et ne peut raisonnablement résoudre la question de la nature des relations des peuples entre eux. Cela tient au caractère absolu de cette doctrine. Elle ne peut concevoir, en effet, ni la sagesse ni l'importance de conceptions religieuses si différentes des théories chrétiennes; aussi, ne manifeste-t-elle envers les diverses religions orientales qu'un voltairianisme superficiel, aussi peu rationnel que peu sympathique. Faute de pouvoir rapporter chaque religion à sa destination propre, les théories chrétiennes ne peuvent présider à aucune opération étendue susceptible de déterminer de salutaires et lentes transformations chez les populations de l'Orient. Elles ne savent qu'indiquer banalement une identique solu-

tion à tous les cas, quelque divers qu'ils soient. nous avons vu le protestantisme anglican proposer la bible et le régime parlementaire, comme moyen de civiliser les peuplades océaniques. Une si naïve exagération de l'esprit absolu, n'est en réalité, que l'expression dernière de la tendance propre à tous les théologismes quelconques.

Nous concentrerons notre discussion à cet égard, sur le catholicisme, qui est à la fois la plus systématique et la plus digne, des doctrines théologiques. Mais notre appréciation s'étendra au fond, et avec plus de raison encore, à toutes les théories théologiques et métaphysiques.

Dès son début le catholicisme, méconnaissant la continuité sociale, montra son inaptitude à comprendre et à rendre justice, aux doctrines produites en dehors de son sein. Les plaisanteries de saint Augustin sur le paganisme sont aussi superficielles que celles de Voltaire sur le christianisme. Certes une religion qui avait présidé à de si grandes destinées, qui avait gouverné l'évolution esthétique de la Grèce et la noble activité du peuple-roi, devait nécessairement être autre chose

qu'une longue, et vaste, et puérile mystification. Aussi en ce cas, le succès de la raillerie prouvait seulement, l'affaissement de la doctrine antérieure, et l'opportunité de la doctrine nouvelle. Ainsi dès l'origine, le catholicisme ne put pas même rendre justice au passé d'où il émanait. Il fut ingrat dès son berceau.

Ce défaut originel s'est toujours conservé; dans la pratique des choses, il n'a pu être convenablement modifié que par la sagesse d'un sacerdoce toujours si supérieur à sa doctrine (1); si le catholicisme a pu méconnaître d'où il sortait, que sera-ce donc, lorsqu'il s'agira de peuples si éloignés, et de mœurs si différentes des nôtres. Aussi n'a-t-il su voir en général, dans les religions de l'Orient (Turquie, Chine, Inde) que des aberrations plus ou moins monstrueuses, au lieu de les

(1) On doit remarquer, en effet, que c'est l'introduction du génie social de Rome dans la constitution du sacerdoce catholique, qui a procuré à celui-ci sa haute efficacité. Aussi le vrai catholicisme a-t-il été justement qualifié de la dénomination de *romain*.

concevoir comme des théories fort convenablement adaptées à un état donné de civilisation, et dignes, par suite, de sympathie et de respect (1).

Si l'on examine les tentatives du prosélytisme catholique en Orient, nous les voyons aussi souvent inefficaces, que souvent renouvelées. Mais, il est juste de dire cependant, que dans les luttes sanglantes de l'Occident avec les autres peuples, la sagesse du sacerdoce a souvent contre-balancé les funestes effets d'une doctrine absolue. Ainsi, la tolérante modération d'Olmedo proteste contre le fanatisme oppressif de Cortez. Dans la conquête de l'Amérique, le clergé espagnol s'est habituellement constitué l'organe énergique de la morale

(1) Il faut excepter les tentatives remarquables, quoique infructueuses, des Jésuites dans l'Inde et dans la Chine. Le pouvoir papal, conséquent à l'esprit absolu de son dogme, a dû finalement condamner ces efforts pour introduire l'esprit relatif, dans le prosélytisme oriental. Mais on peut difficilement concevoir comment l'aversion pour le catholicisme, peut assez aveugler les philosophes, pour leur faire trouver un sujet de réprobation dans cette manière d'agir d'une mémorable corporation.

contre l'oppression. Cette noble conduite, trop peu efficace du reste, tient non pas à la nature de la doctrine, mais à l'existence d'un pouvoir spirituel distinct du pouvoir temporel, et organe nécessaire de la prépondérance de la morale sur la politique; du moins tant que le clergé conserve une digne indépendance.

Ainsi donc, en résumé, le catholicisme, et en général toute doctrine théologique quelconque, ne peut concevoir ni diriger, l'action de l'Occident sur le reste de la terre. Aussi laisse-t-il se développer librement une activité désordonnée, qu'il ne peut ni éclairer ni conduire.

Mais ce sont, la conduite et les doctrines du parti progressiste, ou qui du moins l'est d'intention sinon de fait, qui méritent toute notre attention.

Les sympathies des progressistes, et surtout de nos lettrés soi-disant libéraux, ont été immédiates en faveur de l'Angleterre.

La thèse générale mise en avant a été celle-ci :

La domination anglaise dans l'Inde représente la civilisation de l'Occident, elle est l'élément de propagation de cette civilisation.

Ainsi des gens, livrés à une complète anarchie intellectuelle, dominés par une préoccupation absorbante des intérêts matériels, entraînés par une activité inquiète et dont les mobiles sont essentiellement personnels, n'ont pas craint de représenter une domination envahissante et oppressive comme étant une mission civilisatrice.

L'histoire rapide de la formation de ces opinions, est la meilleure manière d'en montrer et la nature et le danger.

Ces doctrines constituent au fond la forme sous laquelle se traduit maintenant l'esprit d'oppression, et de personnalité immorale et sans règle. Elles sont un extrême résultat du mouvement révolutionnaire des cinq derniers siècles; mouvement qui était progressif, tout en étant plus ou moins anarchique, et qui est devenu désormais aussi rétrograde que perturbateur, maintenant que la reconstruction est à l'ordre du jour.

Le régime du moyen âge plaçait en première ligne la culture morale ou culture des sentiments. La doctrine dirigeante n'atteignait ce résultat qu'indirectement; attendu que le but assigné à chaque fidèle était à la fois personnel et chimérique; ce qui donnait inévitablement un caractère d'égoïsme au travail du perfectionnement moral. Néanmoins, la sagesse du sacerdoce savait prescrire la moralité dans la conduite, au nom du salut personnel.

Mais un tel régime était nécessairement instable, et devait être passager. Aussi dès le commencement du xiv^e siècle, le mouvement de décomposition, surtout en France, marche avec une grande rapidité. La dictature royale s'organise, présidant à la fois, avec une sagesse souvent éminente, à la décomposition du régime ancien et à la préparation graduelle des éléments de l'ordre nouveau.

Ce mouvement est surtout caractérisé par un rapide développement de l'industrie, de la science et de l'art. Aussi, cette civilisation a échappé de plus en plus à la domination de toute doctrine

théologique. Une foi qui se préoccupait essentiellement du ciel, ne pouvait que très-indirectement atteindre une activité surtout dirigée vers la terre. Mais le progrès et le perfectionnement moral restant alors adhérent à des doctrines arriérées, a été négligé et subordonné au progrès matériel et intellectuel.

Ce régime de la transition révolutionnaire des cinq derniers siècles était, malgré d'immenses dangers, aussi inévitable qu'indispensable. Arrivé à son but définitif, le suffisant développement des forces scientifiques, industrielles et esthétiques, il tend à devenir rétrograde faute de se subordonner à la morale. Le positivisme peut seul, en donnant à la morale le caractère scientifique, l'incorporer à la société moderne, dont elle doit régler les divers éléments. Je dis le positivisme, car le catholicisme qui dirigeait le progrès moral n'a pu maintenir sa domination sur les esprits. Par conséquent, comment la doctrine qui n'a pu empêcher la révolution, pourrait-elle la terminer? Quant à la métaphysique, organe passager de destruction et de démolition, elle est évidemment incompétente dans une telle question.

La situation que je viens d'indiquer, s'est bien aggravée de nos jours. Le progrès moral avait été pour tous les gens actifs, subordonné au progrès matériel et intellectuel; un pas de plus a été fait : le progrès intellectuel a été subordonné au progrès industriel. Désormais la science elle-même n'est plus conçue que comme facilitant le développement de l'industrie; et l'art n'est plus qu'un moyen de perfectionner les procédés de satisfaction personnelle que l'industrie enfante. Dès lors le mot *progrès* est devenu le simple équivalent, de *développement industriel sans règles et sans limites*. Pour un grand nombre d'esprits actifs, l'idéal de la civilisation consiste à se transporter rapidement, ou à pouvoir communiquer ses impressions instantanément d'un lieu à un autre. On regarde au fond comme bien plus importante la rapidité du transport, que la qualité des cerveaux transportés, et comme plus urgent le perfectionnement du télégraphe électrique, que la nature des impressions et des sentiments qu'il transmet. En un mot, on considère comme plus nécessaire la création de nouveaux moyens, que la moralisation de leur emploi.

Cette manière de concevoir est définitivement caractérisée par la célèbre et brutale formule

émise au commencement de ce siècle : « Tout pour l'industrie et par l'industrie. »

Aussi le mot *progrès* devient de plus en plus une formule banale, destinée à justifier toute activité déréglée.

Il n'est pas étonnant, par suite, que l'action des peuples de l'Occident sur le reste de la terre ait pris, et conservé un caractère oppressif et désordonné.

On justifie maintenant, au nom du progrès, l'oppression et l'exploitation des populations moins avancées, comme jadis les Espagnols coloraient leurs conquêtes, du prétexte d'amener des âmes au salut éternel.

Le positivisme seul, fondé sur la science et sachant par conséquent faire à l'industrie sa digne part, peut intervenir efficacement dans ces questions.

Les rétrogrades ne peuvent régler une situation dont la direction leur a échappé, et les progres-

sistes glorifient désormais l'oppression au nom du progrès (1).

Mais heureusement, ces deux sortes de doctrines ne sont pas l'expression des tendances véritables, quoique inaperçues, de la situation occidentale.

L'instinct des masses et des natures honnêtes, sent au fond, que dans les relations des classes entre elles, comme dans celles des peuples entre eux : *le règlement moral des forces est désormais plus important que leur développement.*

Avant d'expliquer comment le positivisme peut seul être l'organe systématique de ces dispositions, je dois indiquer rapidement de quelle

(1) Nous avons vu de prétendus libéraux ne pas craindre de railler, des Chinois et des Arabes défendant leur nationalité. L'étrangeté apparente des usages et des croyances de ces populations, les mettaient sans doute hors de la morale ? Du reste, en voyant le sort si précaire et si malheureux de nos prolétaires dans de grands centres industriels, nos docteurs devraient peut-être moins s'enorgueillir de la supériorité de leur civilisation.

manière, sous le nom de *république occidentale* nous concevons et définissons le groupe des populations avancées, qui doit présider aux destinées de l'humanité.

CE QU'ON ENTEND, DANS LE POSITIVISME, PAR LE MOT
DE RÉPUBLIQUE OCCIDENTALE.

L'Europe occidentale est formée d'États indépendants, mais solidaires entre eux, et qui constituent un groupe distinct et bien déterminé; c'est ce groupe qu'Auguste Comte désigne sous le nom de *république occidentale*.

Cette expression est infiniment plus juste que celle de l'illustre de Maistre, qui ayant entrevu ce phénomène social, l'avait nommé le *miracle de la monarchie européenne*.

La dénomination était évidemment impropre;

puisque ce qui fait le caractère éminent d'une telle aggrégation, c'est d'être une association spontanée d'États indépendants soumis à des gouvernements distincts, mais ayant une grande communauté de sentiments, d'idées et d'habitudes. Ce serait donc une monarchie sans monarque. En second lieu, l'épithète d'*européenne* est trop vague, comme englobant des populations qui ne doivent pas en faire partie, la Russie par exemple.

Cette république occidentale se compose de cinq populations, y compris les annexes américaines. Deux au sud : l'Italie et l'Espagne, deux au nord : l'Angleterre et l'Allemagne. Au centre est la France, tête de cette confédération naturelle, et qui depuis le moyen âge en possède la présidence. Le grand Corneille peignant la chute de l'empire romain a pu justement dire :

Un grand destin commence, un grand destin s'achève;
L'empire disparaît et la France s'élève.

Auguste Comte a remarqué que la substitution

de la prépondérance de Paris à celle de Rome, ou d'une suprématie librement acceptée à une domination forcée, marque le vrai caractère fondamental de ce groupe mémorable.

Si après avoir fait connaître les populations qui constituent la *république occidentale*, nous voulons en faire connaître le caractère principal, nous pourrions la définir ainsi :

La *république occidentale* est l'ensemble des populations qui, soumises au régime catholico-féodal, ont participé au mouvement de décomposition de ce régime depuis le quatorzième siècle, et développé de plus en plus leurs relations mutuelles depuis cette époque, sous la graduelle prépondérance du régime industriel et pacifique.

Cette définition, historique comme doit l'être toute véritable définition sociale, circonscrit nettement un tel groupe. Ces cinq grands États, nécessairement indépendants, forment une collection qui ayant la même série d'antécédents a, par suite, une similitude fondamentale de mœurs, d'habitudes et de tendances.

Ces populations diverses ne peuvent être réunies sous la domination d'un gouvernement unique. Au milieu de l'anarchie des cinq derniers siècles, quelques tentatives de *monarchie universelle* ont été faites. Elles ont misérablement échoué, après avoir produit d'immenses ravages passagers, comme tous les efforts quelconques qui sont dirigés contre les tendances essentielles d'une situation. Il n'y a de définitivement efficace en politique que l'activité dirigée dans le sens même du mouvement. Les chimères de *monarchie universelle* sont définitivement disparues. Mais les affinités que le passé a créées entre les diverses populations de l'Occident, et que le présent développe, doivent être systématiquement coordonnées par une doctrine uniforme, établie, enseignée et appliquée par un même pouvoir théorique.

Il est de toute évidence que la doctrine qui pourra seule résoudre ce grand problème, pourra seule aussi, coordonner et diriger l'action de cette tête de l'humanité sur le reste de notre planète. Comment la doctrine qui ne pourrait être occidentale pourrait-elle aspirer à devenir universelle? Le catholicisme a présidé à la première formation de ce groupe

immense. Alors s'est produit cet admirable phénomène, unique dans l'histoire : un ensemble d'États soumis à des gouvernements différents, mais intellectuellement et moralement dirigés par une même autorité spirituelle. Ce grand fait était préparé par tout l'ensemble des antécédents gréco-romains. Le catholicisme romain a organisé sa constitution et son extension. Aussi l'étude, sous ce point de vue, de la seconde phase du moyen âge (de l'an 700 à l'an 1000) est profondément intéressante, comme présentant une suite du système romain continué sous une nouvelle forme, bien supérieure à l'ancienne. D'abord, l'esprit militaire agissait essentiellement sous forme défensive, en forçant par là les peuples barbares à devenir sédentaires, et le catholicisme, avec un dévouement et une énergie incomparables, assurait l'agrégation, en incorporant ces peuples à un même système de croyances et de sentiments. Ainsi surgit la grande politique des Pépin et des Charlemagne ; ainsi s'établirent les naturelles relations de la France et de la Papauté !

Par là se constitua l'économie générale du système catholique au moyen âge, qu'Auguste Comte dé-

clare (1) devoir être conçu de plus en plus comme formant jusqu'ici, le chef-d'œuvre politique de la raison humaine. Mais ce régime était nécessairement instable. Ni l'activité militaire, ni l'esprit théologique ne permettaient une organisation définitive de la division des deux pouvoirs. Le système devait osciller entre la théocratie et l'empire.

Depuis le xiv^e siècle l'ordre du moyen âge s'est successivement décomposé; d'abord spontanément dans le xiv^e et le xv^e, puis systématiquement depuis le xvi^e.

Depuis le xiii^e siècle le catholicisme ayant renoncé à toute absorption de l'islamisme, avait définitivement abandonné par cela même toute prétention à l'universalité.

Depuis le xvi^e siècle l'Occident s'est lui-même réparti entre le catholicisme et le protestantisme. Après de violents conflits, on peut dire qu'à par-

(1) *Cours de Philosophie Positive*, t. V, p. 326.

tir du xvii^e siècle, tous les hommes sensés ont renoncé à résoudre un tel dualisme ; et la diplomatie européenne l'a définitivement sanctionné.

Le catholicisme n'a donc pas conservé sa prépondérance ; comment pourrait-il présider à la réorganisation d'une unité qu'il n'a pas pu maintenir, après avoir contribué à la former.

Depuis le xiv^e siècle, les doctrines théologiques ont été, en fait, une cause de discorde, entre les diverses parties de l'Occident. Depuis cinq siècles, elles ont graduellement perdu leur influence sur la vie publique, réduisant de plus en plus leur action à la vie privée. Dans ce cercle du reste elles exercent, sur tout le catholicisme, une action incomparablement utile, en empêchant en Occident une désuétude complète de la culture morale.

Il est donc manifeste que les doctrines théologiques sont, de par l'histoire, mises hors de cause pour la constitution de l'unité occidentale.

Quant aux théories métaphysiques elles sont hors de discussion à ce sujet. Ces doctrines n'ont ja-

mais été que des organes de doute et d'anarchie, passagèrement indispensables.

Cependant, au milieu des inévitables conflits que suscitait la décomposition de l'ordre ancien, les rapports des divers États de l'Occident entre eux se sont étendus et consolidés.

Cela est dû à la prépondérance graduelle du régime industriel et pacifique.

Par une suite inévitable de la libération des masses opérée au moyen âge, sous l'action combinée du catholicisme et de la féodalité, le régime industriel a tendu à prévaloir de plus en plus; ce qui, outre une similitude d'habitudes, amenait des relations suivies et nombreuses entre les peuples occidentaux.

D'un autre côté, à mesure que les dissensions théologiques s'aggravaient, des doctrines scientifiques communes à l'Occident, et à l'Occident seulement (1), croissaient en importance et en

(1) Il est digne de remarque que la doctrine du double

étendue. Des opinions plus fixes et plus stables surgissaient à la place des dogmes indémontrés et indémontrables de la théologie et de la métaphysique. Ainsi se préparait la graduelle substitution de la *foi* démontrée à la *foi* révélée. Je dis la *foi* ; car il importe de remarquer qu'au moment même où les doctrines anciennes employaient vainement la force pour maintenir une domination qui leur échappait, les théories scientifiques, au contraire, s'imposaient à tout l'Occident sous l'actif effort de quelques hommes de génie, le plus souvent pauvres et persécutés. Et, de plus, ces théories choquant ordinairement, et les apparences vulgaires et de longues habitudes, étaient acceptées néanmoins, quoique leur démonstration ne fût accessible qu'à un très-petit nombre d'esprits compétents. Il suffisait qu'elles fussent démontrables. On ne songeait nullement à invoquer envers elles le dogme métaphysique de la liberté d'examen (1).

mouvement de la terre admise universellement en Occident est, en dehors de ce groupe d'élite, tout à fait repoussée.

(1) Il n'y a point de liberté de conscience en astrono-

Dans une note fort remarquable des *Soirées de Saint-Petersbourg*, l'illustre de Maistre a écrit ce qui suit :

« Je ne sais si je me trompe, mais cette espèce de despotisme, qui est le caractère distinctif des savants modernes, n'est propre qu'à retarder la science. Elle repose aujourd'hui tout entière sur de profonds calculs à la portée d'un très-petit nombre d'hommes. Ils n'ont qu'à s'entendre pour imposer silence à la foule. Leurs théories sont devenues une espèce de religion; le moindre doute est un sacrilège.

» Le traducteur anglais de toutes les œuvres de

mie, en physique, en chimie, en physiologie même, en ce sens que chacun trouverait absurde de ne pas croire de confiance aux principes établis dans ces sciences par les hommes compétents. S'il en est autrement en politique, c'est uniquement parce que, les anciens principes étant tombés et les nouveaux n'étant pas encore formés, il n'y a point, à proprement parler, dans cet intervalle de principes établis (Auguste Comte, *Cours de Philosophie positive*, t. IV).

Bacon, le docteur Shaw, a dit, dans une de ses notes dont il n'est plus en mon pouvoir d'assigner la place, mais dont j'assure l'authenticité : *que le système de Copernic a bien encore ses difficultés.*

» Certes, il faut être bien intrépide pour énoncer un tel doute. La personne du traducteur m'est absolument inconnue, j'ignore même s'il existe; il m'est impossible d'apprécier les raisons qu'il n'a pas jugé à propos de nous faire connaître; mais sous le rapport du courage, c'est un héros.

» Malheureusement ce courage n'est pas commun, et je ne puis douter qu'il n'y ait dans plusieurs têtes (allemandes surtout) des pensées de ce genre qui n'osent se montrer. »

Les réflexions de cet éminent philosophe méritent notre attention, sous plusieurs rapports.

En premier lieu, il constate d'une manière irrécusable la prépondérance en Occident de la foi scientifique, puisqu'il va jusqu'à qualifier d'héroïsme le courage d'émettre un doute sur les pro-

positions fondamentales de la science, établies par la série des hommes compétents.

Mais de Maistre aurait dû compléter son observation, en remarquant que les mêmes esprits qui admettaient si facilement les notions scientifiques, sans doute ni discussion, étaient précisément les plus réfractaires à l'admission des dogmes théologiques. En second lieu, les observations de de Maistre prouvent combien sont dominés par l'esprit révolutionnaire ceux même qui s'en prétendent dégagés, et qui ont la prétention de l'attaquer directement.

De Maistre appelle *despotisme* cette libre adoption par la foule, des dogmes scientifiques, sans remarquer que l'expression est contradictoire; puisque jamais soumission ne fut plus volontaire. Il va même jusqu'à reprendre la superficielle hypothèse voltairienne, d'un accord possible entre tous les savants pour mystifier et exploiter le public; hypothèse que le xviii^e siècle avait essentiellement appliquée aux croyances théologiques. Enfin, de Maistre se présente ainsi comme atteint de la maladie occidentale, qui consiste, comme l'a dit

Auguste Comte, dans le dogme de l'infaillibilité individuelle, et dans l'insurrection de la raison personnelle contre la raison collective.

L'esprit positif peut donc seul établir une foi.

« La *foi* consiste, dans cette disposition éminemment sociale, à admettre de confiance les principes établis par les hommes compétents. » La foi n'a pas manqué jusqu'ici à chacune des propositions essentielles de la science moderne; de Maistre la constate en la maudissant.

Ainsi l'ordre nouveau est susceptible d'une foi plus stable, plus étendue que celle de l'ordre ancien.

La prépondérance de l'esprit positif a donc posé en Occident les bases d'une véritable unité intellectuelle et morale. Ce phénomène est désormais trop incontestable pour être nié.

Tant que l'esprit scientifique a été borné aux spéculations de l'ordre inorganique ou vital, son

action sociale a été radicalement insuffisante. Mais en s'étendant, sous l'incomparable effort d'Auguste Comte, à l'ordre social et moral, il a pu, en se systématisant, s'élever enfin au point de vue religieux.

La religion positive fondée sur la coordination de la science peut seule présider à la réorganisation spirituelle de l'Occident.

Fidèle au véritable esprit scientifique, la religion positive ne fait que coordonner et diriger l'unité intellectuelle et morale, que l'ensemble des antécédents a spontanément préparée chez l'élite de l'humanité.

Le positivisme vient ainsi résoudre sur des bases scientifiques, inébranlables, le problème qu'avaient entrevu nos admirables précurseurs du moyen âge : « établissement d'un pouvoir spirituel distinct et indépendant du pouvoir temporel, dont la destination fondamentale est d'assurer librement en Occident la prépondérance de la morale, dans toutes les relations humaines, domestiques et sociales.

Après avoir indiqué comment le positivisme

fonde l'unité de la *république occidentale* par la prépondérance d'une même religion, il nous reste à indiquer sommairement comment il conçoit l'action extérieure de ce groupe des populations avancées.

DES RELATIONS DE L'OCCIDENT AVEC LE RESTE DE LA TERRE,
AU POINT DE VUE DE LA RELIGION POSITIVE.

La *République occidentale* constitue la tête de l'humanité. Elle a donc spontanément la direction des affaires terrestres ; mais cette direction doit devenir systématique au lieu d'être empirique, protectrice au lieu d'être oppressive.

Depuis le *xiv^e* siècle les relations de l'Occident avec le reste de la terre se sont graduellement développées. Elles ont eu un caractère commercial ; mais toujours accompagnées de tentatives de conquête, et d'essais d'un prosélytisme plus ou moins

oppressif. Dans le plus grand nombre de cas on a ainsi voulu exploiter, conquérir et convertir les nombreuses populations qu'a visitées l'inquiète activité des peuples avancés. Cette activité a toujours été déréglée, et le plus souvent immorale. A mesure que la foi chrétienne perdait en Occident la direction des affaires générales, et que de sa dissolution s'engendraient les plus terribles conflits, elle essayait empiriquement de s'étendre à des populations étrangères à son milieu naturel. Aussi cette même foi, qui avait surgi malgré tous les obstacles avec une prépondérance irrésistible, qui pendant des siècles avait présidé aux destinées de l'élite de l'humanité, n'a pu entamer nullement les populations orientales. Et là même, comme en Amérique (Mexique, Pérou), où elle semble avoir prévalu, cette prépondérance est bien plus apparente que réelle; et les croyances primitives de ces peuples se sont conservées sous la couche superficielle des doctrines chrétiennes.

Ce double fait, d'un facile avènement occidental, et d'une impuissance radicale en Orient, est une frappante démonstration du caractère né-

cessairement local de ces croyances théologiques. Adoptées dans les pays où elles se trouvent en rapport avec un ensemble déterminé de besoins, et où les antécédents les ont successivement préparées, elles échouent radicalement dans tous les milieux différents, et le titre d'*universelle* qu'elles s'adjugent, reste comme une expression du problème qu'elles se sont proposé, et de leur impuissance à le résoudre.

Ces croyances ne peuvent être ni universelles ni durables.

La religion émanée de la science peut seule devenir universelle, et résoudre enfin ce grand désir d'une unité intellectuelle et morale de tous les peuples de la terre, qui depuis deux mille ans a toujours préoccupé les grandes âmes.

La papauté a essayé de régler l'activité extérieure de l'Occident, et malgré les préjugés révolutionnaires à cet égard, on doit reconnaître que si elle a échoué au fond, à cause de l'insuffisance de la doctrine, elle a du moins beaucoup diminué

et adouci la violence de l'oppression. Mais, même cette intervention insuffisante s'est affaiblie de plus en plus à mesure que l'autorité sociale de la papauté sur l'Occident diminuait, et depuis le siècle dernier, l'action extérieure des peuples avancés a été radicalement dérégulée.

Le positivisme qui vient installer enfin la prépondérance de la morale pour le règlement de toutes les relations humaines, peut seul poser les principes d'après lesquels doivent être dirigés les rapports extérieurs des peuples avancés avec ceux qui le sont relativement moins.

Au fond ces principes se réduisent essentiellement à ceci :

1° Dégager les relations commerciales de l'Occident avec le reste de la terre, de toute tentative d'oppression politique ;

2° Remplacer un mépris superficiel pour les religions de ces peuples, par l'appréciation de la valeur relative de ces doctrines. Elles sont adap-

tées à un état donné de civilisation, et par suite elles sont ce qui, pour le moment, convient le mieux à ces populations.

Le positivisme substituera ainsi la sympathie à un aveugle orgueil, et une sage appréciation, vraiment scientifique, à un puéril dénigrement voltairien. Par suite, les rapports commerciaux dégagés de toute oppression matérielle et de tout prosélytisme méprisant, deviendront le point de départ d'une action bienfaisante de l'Occident, à mesure qu'il se régénérera lui-même. Nous pourrions ainsi servir ces populations sans nous démoraliser nous-mêmes par une domination injustifiable. Ce sont ces considérations que je veux sommairement développer.

Il faut, en premier lieu, comprendre combien est irrationnelle l'opinion d'après laquelle nous traitons de barbarie, tout état de civilisation qui n'est pas absolument conforme au nôtre.

La notion de civilisation est relative et non pas absolue. Sans doute le travail successif des générations pousse l'espèce humaine vers une certaine

limite consistant dans l'ordre social le plus conforme à l'ensemble de notre nature et de notre situation. Mais un tel état ne peut être immédiatement atteint, et c'est d'après une marche naturelle tout à fait nécessaire que s'opèrent les pas successifs de cette immense évolution. La philosophie positive a établi les lois générales d'une telle progression.

Chaque état social est donc caractérisé par un ensemble de croyances, d'habitudes, d'institutions, qui résulte de tous les antécédents, et qui constitue le degré de civilisation propre à chaque cas, et qui ne peut être modifié que graduellement et d'après des lois déterminées.

C'est ainsi que nous voyons d'immenses populations vivre sous la domination de religions diverses. Ces religions, en rapport avec leur état mental et social, président et règlent l'existence de ces peuples.

Que voulez-vous mettre à la place? Vous voulez, dites-vous, civiliser les Chinois. Mais qu'est-ce donc que la civilisation si vous appelez barbarie

un régime, qui depuis des siècles fait vivre convenablement 300 millions d'hommes sous une même domination.

Pensez-vous donc, en ce moment, mieux résoudre qu'eux le problème d'une existence satisfaisante des classes inférieures. Considérez le sort de vos prolétaires dans un si grand nombre de circonstances, et dites sérieusement si vous entendez mieux que les Chinois la solution de ce problème économique.

Il n'y a qu'une absurde superficialité, et un extrême orgueil qui puissent, dans l'état actuel de l'esprit humain, faire croire que l'on transporte ainsi une civilisation dans une autre, et que la substitution s'opère ainsi spontanément.

Les lois naturelles, d'après lesquelles une civilisation en modifie une autre, sont encore profondément inconnues. Les insuccès répétés de toutes les tentatives faites sur les populations mahométanes, brahmaniques, chinoises, prouvent que le problème est plus difficile, que ne l'a supposé la naïve confiance de nos docteurs.

Si donc vous voulez sérieusement faire progresser, comme on dit maintenant, les populations moins avancées, commencez par déterminer d'une manière générale les lois de modifiabilité d'une civilisation donnée, et quand vous en aurez trouvé les conditions principales, alors seulement vous pourrez vous mettre à l'œuvre, et entreprendre une digne propagande.

Mais loin de là, on ne considère ces peuples qu'avec le plus absurde dédain. Au lieu d'étudier sagement les convenances réelles de leurs usages et de leurs croyances, on prend le procédé plus commode de les railler. C'est en effet infiniment plus facile que de comprendre et d'apprécier.

Il y a plus, toute action systématique de l'Occident sur le reste de la terre ne peut être actuellement que profondément désastreuse pour les peuples sur lesquels on l'exercerait.

Qu'iriez-vous transporter chez les populations moins avancées? Rien autre chose qu'un état de profonde anarchie mentale, un développement in-

dustriel désordonné, sous lequel tend à s'écraser toute digne amélioration morale (1).

Car quel dogme ira-t-on prêcher chez les populations étrangères à l'Occident?

Aucune doctrine quelconque ne gouverne actuellement les esprits. Il y a sans doute de puissants éléments d'ordre dans notre forte civilisation occidentale, mais ils sont sans aucun lien, aucune doctrine ne les dirige, et le positivisme seul pourra les rallier.

La vie réelle a échappé en Occident aux croyances anciennes. Nous ne pouvons donc transporter maintenant hors de chez nous, que le spectacle de notre anarchie, ou le tableau plus triste encore d'un scepticisme dégradant.

(1) Notre illustre Montesquieu a exprimé d'une manière piquante cette disposition d'esprit « Mais, si quelqu'un par hasard, apprenait à la compagnie que j'étais Persan, j'entendais aussitôt autour de moi un bourdonnement. Ah ! ah ! monsieur est Persan ? C'est une chose bien extraordinaire ! Comment peut-on être Persan ? »

On se plaint que les populations orientales sont immobiles. D'abord, cette banale appréciation n'est que la routinière explication propre à tous ceux qui parlent sur ce qu'ils n'ont jamais examiné. C'est exactement l'analogue de nos littérateurs, admirant la parfaite régularité des phénomènes célestes; phénomènes fort réguliers sans doute pour ceux qui ne les connaissent pas, et n'en ont jamais apprécié les perturbations (1). Mais en admettant cela, peut-on croire que le spectacle d'une rapide et désordonnée succession de doctrines soit propre à faire renoncer ces peuples aux dogmes vénérables, que le lent tra-

(1) Cette disposition de nos métaphysiciens, à raisonner à tort et à travers sur ce qu'ils ne connaissent pas est vraiment merveilleuse. Un psychologue, ayant à parler d'astronomie, citait comme type le génie astronomique de Newton. Cet écrivain avait entendu dire probablement, que Newton avait fondé la *mécanique céleste*; cela lui a suffi pour faire d'un grand géomètre un grand astronome. L'absence totale de connaissances réelles qui caractérise en France une telle classe, ne l'empêche jamais de décider imperturbablement sur tous les sujets quelconques.

vail des siècles a créés pour la direction de leur existence.

En résumé, l'Occident ayant graduellement abandonné les croyances antiques et n'ayant pu encore adopter la religion positive, qui seule coordonne les éléments de l'ordre moderne, ne doit pas songer à transporter au dehors son désordre moral et son anarchie intellectuelle (1).

(1) Nos métaphysiciens en sont venus à ce point, de proclamer l'état d'examen et de doute continus, comme l'état normal de la raison humaine. Ils ont été jusqu'à glorifier l'instabilité permanente de l'intelligence. Une telle dégradation mentale se conçoit difficilement. Cette disposition d'esprit amènerait bientôt à un véritable état de folie. Cette métaphysique y conduit inévitablement dès qu'elle est active. Et, de tels esprits ne l'évitent, qu'en jouissant dans une passive stagnation des prébendes que leur a créées la munificence nationale. On serend raison de l'aversion que le positivisme inspire à de telles natures. Ils craignent l'avènement d'une morale démontrée, qui ne laissant pas de refuge aux sophismes de l'égoïsme, demanderait naturellement s'il est urgent de créer de nombreux loisirs à des gens, dont l'unique pro-

La grande question à l'ordre du jour est désormais, et de plus en plus, la réorganisation intellectuelle et morale de l'Occident lui-même.

Le passé a développé les forces industrielles, scientifiques et esthétiques; mais ces forces ont échappé radicalement à l'action des doctrines anciennes, qui se sont trouvées de plus en plus incapables de les diriger et de les régler. On a même été jusqu'à systématiser un tel état, en déclarant que le but de toute religion est céleste et non terrestre. Il y a plus : même ceux qui admettent encore les anciens dogmes trouvent le plus souvent étrange, et repoussent autant que les plus purs révolutionnaires, toute intervention

fession est de ressasser indéfiniment des énoncés de questions insolubles.

Dureste, leur conduite envers le catholicisme est caractéristique à ce point de vue. Cachant mal, sous des serviles démonstrations, l'aversion que leur inspire cette noble religion, ils évitent par la proclamation de leur infaillibilité personnelle, le règlement qui émane nécessairement de la reconnaissance de l'autorité pontificale.

de l'autorité morale dans le règlement de la vie privée.

De cet état de chose, contre lequel les doctrines théologiques n'offrent plus qu'une honorable mais impuissante protestation, résulte l'abus croissant des forces, surtout privées, dans les relations de la vie humaine.

De là, trop souvent, oppression des inférieurs par les supérieurs ; par suite malaise, désaffection et révolte de la part des inférieurs.

Le grand problème est donc celui-ci : établissement d'une doctrine générale, ou mieux d'une religion, qui librement adoptée, fasse prévaloir les principes de la morale démontrée, d'après lesquels se régleront toutes les relations quelconques. Ou, pour plus de précision, la question essentielle est dans l'avènement d'un nouveau pouvoir spirituel, dirigeant au nom d'une religion toujours démontrable, les esprits et les cœurs.

C'est là que doivent tendre tous les cœurs dévoués, les âmes honnêtes et sincères. Le temps des puerilités académiques est passé. Il s'agit mainte-

nant, bien plus d'utiliser les résultats acquis, que d'en faire surgir de nouveaux. *En un mot, le règlement moral de toutes les forces humaines doit prévaloir sur leur développement.* Le passé a développé les forces, l'avenir doit les régler.

Par là, le prolétariat s'incorporera dignement à la société moderne. Le règlement des principales souffrances de sa situation est surtout moral, et non pas politique. Ce sont les forces privées qui abusent, infiniment plus que les forces publiques. Les ambitieux seuls, peuvent de nos jours préconiser les changements politiques comme moyen d'amélioration sociale. Vous avez à demander au pouvoir surtout une chose : le sage maintien de l'ordre matériel, condition indispensable de toute digne rénovation intellectuelle et morale. Cessez de croire l'absurde principe : qu'une réforme puisse être à la fois immédiate et radicale. La politique peut apporter des soulagements, la libre et lente prépondérance de la morale peut seule résoudre définitivement la question.

Mettez votre cœur et votre esprit à la hauteur de votre rôle social.

Faites enfin effort pour comprendre et pratiquer une doctrine, qui proclamant le caractère social de toutes les forces humaines, peut seule établir les règles de leur digne emploi.

Considérez combien il est peu rare de voir ceux qui déclament le plus contre les abus du pouvoir politique, abuser le plus dans la vie privée, et ne se reconnaître ni devoirs ni obligations.

Vous comprendrez par là, que la grande solution de la question sociale est dans la profonde rénovation intellectuelle à laquelle peut seule présider une doctrine qui, émanée de la science, reste toujours démontrable. •

Mais le prolétariat surtout, comprendra dès lors, que s'il doit justement demander que les forts reconnaissent et pratiquent leurs obligations morales envers les faibles, il aurait mauvaise grâce à méconnaître ce principe, en approuvant toute oppression quelconque des populations moins avancées par les peuples occidentaux, sous prétexte de civiliser les gens malgré eux.

Aussi, toutes les âmes honnêtes et éclairées, quelles que soient du reste leurs opinions, doivent sentir de plus en plus, que l'état intérieur de l'Occident mérite surtout leur urgente sollicitude.

Et, ceux qui admettent l'avènement inévitable d'un régime purement industriel, et ce sont tous les esprits actifs, comprendront qu'il est contradictoire d'employer le régime militaire comme procédé de lucre commercial.

Enfin, si nous voulons résumer la politique générale du positivisme quant aux relations internationales, nous dirons qu'elle consiste :

1° A reconnaître la complète indépendance temporelle des divers États distincts de l'occident de l'Europe, qui ne doivent être liés entre eux, que par la similitude de religion, de mœurs et d'habitudes.

2° A pousser au développement progressif des relations commerciales de l'Occident avec le reste de la terre, sans tentative quelconque d'oppression

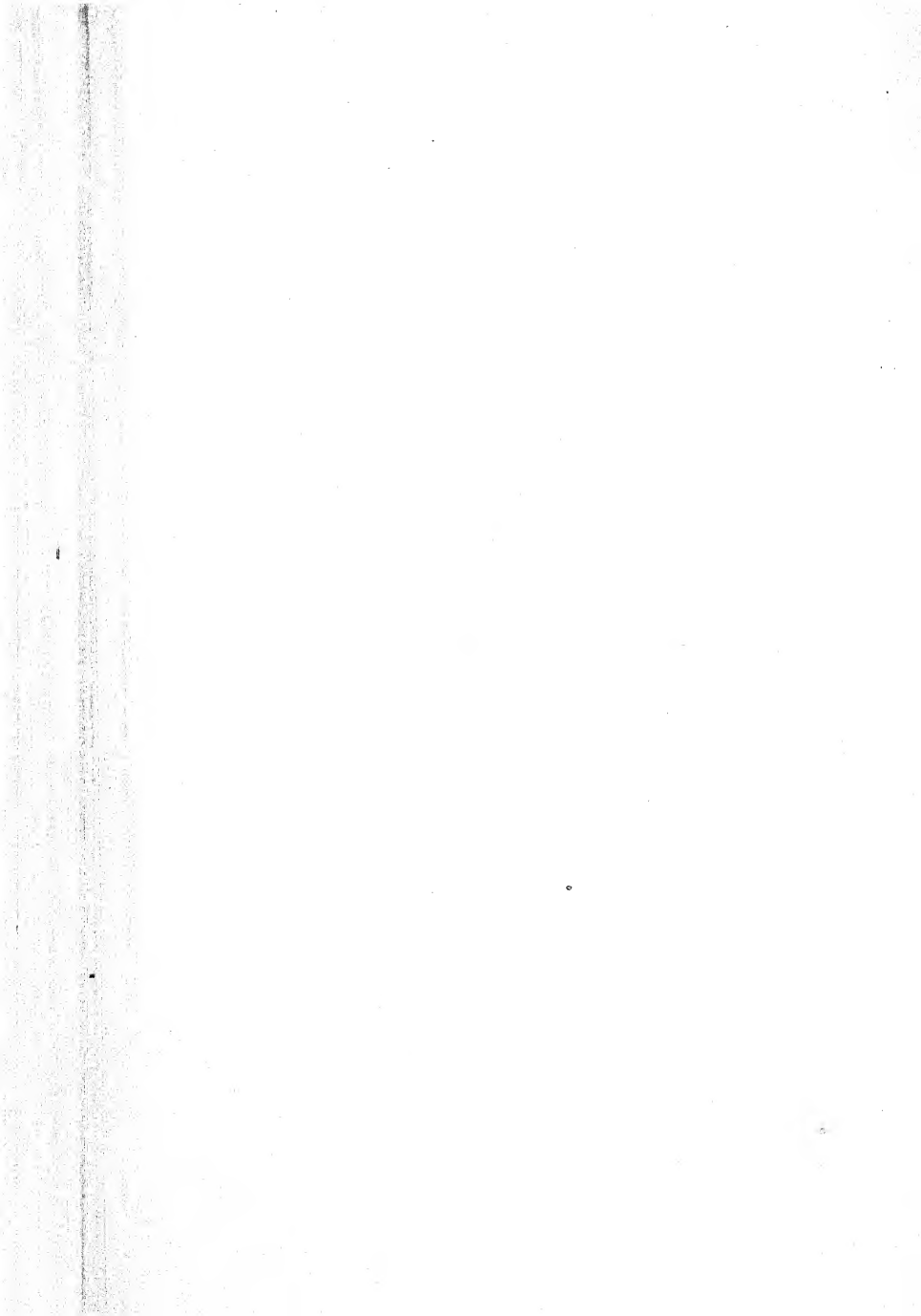
ou de prosélytisme forcé, en employant seulement la force maritime à organiser une digne police collective de nos mers.

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PREMIÈRE PARTIE.



L'INDE.



PREMIÈRE PARTIE.

Subordonner la politique à la morale, — en d'autres termes, juger au point de vue de la moralité les desseins et les actes de la politique, — tel est le but du positivisme envisagé

comme philosophie sociale. C'est renverser le rapport qui a si longtemps subsisté entre ces deux sciences, et qui est également préjudiciable à chacune d'elles. On ne peut davantage permettre à la politique de ne se point préoccuper de la moralité, ni à la raison d'État d'empêcher que les questions sociales ne soient portées devant un tribunal plus élevé. Il faut (et c'est la plus simple manière d'exprimer la chose) admettre en principe que, pour les États comme pour les individus, la question des devoirs doit désormais primer celle des droits. Poser et assurer ce principe me paraît être le seul objet vraiment digne de tout écrit sur les questions d'actualité.

J'ai publié dans ce but, l'hiver dernier, une

brochure intitulée « Gibraltar, ou la politique extérieure de l'Angleterre. » Je me suis efforcé d'y mettre en évidence, dans le cas le plus simple que j'avais pu trouver, comment l'Angleterre pouvait introduire ce nouveau principe dans sa conduite politique. Elle avait à se demander, relativement au plus faible membre de l'Europe occidentale, non pas ce qu'elle avait le droit ou la faculté de faire, mais ce qu'il était de son devoir d'entreprendre, eu égard à sa position sociale parmi les peuples, et aux prétentions des autres nations sur elle-même. Elle avait à se demander quelle était la meilleure manière de travailler, non pas à son agrandissement particulier, mais au bien-être général du système dont elle est partie intégrante.

J'espérais que ma tâche était accomplie ; j'espérais qu'il suffisait, pour le moment, d'avoir mis ces points de vue en évidence, et que je pouvais retourner à d'autres soins. Car le principe une fois posé, il était aisé de voir qu'il est d'une application très-étendue. Cela était acquis, et cela impliquait la révision complète de la situation et des relations internationales de l'Angleterre, comme de ses rapports politiques avec l'Occident et l'Orient. Mais lorsque j'écrivis, il me sembla convenable de me borner à un cas spécial dans lequel il était aisé d'appliquer ce principe. Il n'y avait pas alors de raisons pressantes qui m'engageassent à expliquer comment il pouvait embrasser le plus important de tous les cas auxquels il pût être appliqué, celui de l'Inde. Parde bons ou de mauvais

moyens nous avions conquis cet empire, et il n'y avait aucune apparence que sa possession fût mise de sitôt en question. Des actes récents d'agrandissement arbitraire avaient même semblé rencontrer une entière soumission. Et il ne pouvait venir à la pensée d'un observateur éloigné, que la question de l'Inde allait être prochainement agitée.

A voir les choses de loin, on pouvait être convaincu, comme je l'étais, que nous n'étions aucunement justifiables de garder notre empire d'Orient. On pouvait même conclure, d'après les principes courants, que cette domination manquant de légitimité, manquait par conséquent de bases et était à tout moment susceptible d'être attaquée. Mais il était géné-

ralement admis que, selon toute probabilité, notre règne devait présentement durer encore. Je n'avais pas été plus loin, quant à moi, et je m'étais contenté de protester contre une telle usurpation, en l'acceptant comme un fait accompli. Je ne m'aveuglais pas sur les moyens injustes par lesquels nous avions acquis cet empire, et j'étais parfaitement éclairé sur le mal résultant de son occupation définitive. Mal égal pour l'Angleterre et pour l'Inde. Je croyais toutefois que le moment de sa chute était ajourné pour quelque temps encore ; et j'avais fondé cette opinion sur la conviction où j'étais, que le gouvernement anglais, par la force de l'ordre, par le progrès des améliorations matérielles et surtout par les exemples de l'honneur et de la loyauté occidentales, avait en quelque

sorte racheté son origine ; et que, s'il n'était pas justifiable en principe, il offrait du moins, à ses sujets orientaux, par ses résultats pratiques, une compensation suffisante. Dans de tels sentiments, j'attendais patiemment le jour où, par l'énergique réaction de la population indigène notre domination deviendrait désormais impossible ; ou bien, ce qui était autrement désirable, que la nation anglaise abandonnât volontairement cette conquête, et que nous nous retirions librement, après avoir fait tous nos efforts pour assurer au pays que nous avions si longtemps gouverné, l'ordre, un bon gouvernement, et la sécurité extérieure.

Mais le cours précipité des événements et la révolte récente ont fait évanouir toute idée de

patiente résignation à un mal suffisamment constaté. La question indienne est devenue la question dominante. Sa solution immédiate comme son avenir le plus éloigné occupent toutes les pensées.

La discussion est générale sur ce sujet ; mais les principes sur lesquels elle repose sont partout les mêmes. Comme les miens se trouvent essentiellement différents, je sens que je manquerais à la cause que j'ai embrassée et que je faillirais, en conscience, à mon devoir, si je reculais devant les conséquences d'un loyal aveu des opinions que je me suis formées et des idées premières dont je les ai tirées ; si je ne posais la solution que la philosophie positive m'offre comme consistante et morale, en face

de toutes ces solutions qui me semblent incohérentes et immorales, d'autant plus même qu'elles semblent avoir plus de consistance. Cette philosophie prétend ouvertement à une application universelle ; je suis convaincu que cette prétention est fondée : je ne puis donc rester silencieux.

Pour l'Inde, comme pour Gibraltar, c'eût été une illusion de supposer que, dans l'état actuel de l'opinion, la politique que je propose pût obtenir un assentiment immédiat. Ces deux cas diffèrent cependant, la possession de Gibraltar ne devant probablement pas être discutée de longtemps, tandis que pour l'Inde la question est soulevée. Il est possible, et même probable, que la lutte qui s'est engagée contre

quelques régiments mutinés et qui bientôt a pris les proportions d'une révolte, devienne une révolution telle, que notre gouvernement et notre nation soient amenés à se faire cette demande : Faut-il nous mettre à l'œuvre pour reconquérir l'Inde ? Dès lors qu'une semblable question, si elle n'est point encore explicitement formulée, se trouve cependant instinctivement pressentie, le moment est venu pour moi de parler ; alors, des considérations légères en apparence prennent un grand poids ; en présence d'une conjoncture aussi formidable, grosse de conséquences si graves, la nation anglaise pourra demander s'il n'y a aucun moyen d'éviter ce mal imminent ? si nous sommes assez certains de notre droit pour justifier à nos yeux les immenses sacrifices que nous allons nous

imposer ainsi qu'à la postérité ? si l'Inde est un légitime objet de conquête pour nos armées ? si c'est un devoir de la recouvrer ? si nous sommes tenus, enfin, pour quelques avantages douteux, de lui infliger de propos délibéré toutes les horreurs de la guerre ?

Je ne veux point représenter ici les vicissitudes de la lutte : on ne peut, humainement, y trouver qu'un pénible intérêt. Je la réprouve énergiquement, et le mot de regret serait trop faible pour exprimer mon sentiment touchant la conduite que nous avons tenue dans l'Inde avant la révolte. Elle a été singulièrement caractérisée par un de nos hommes d'Etat en ce pays, dans cette phrase hardie : « Nous avons marché comme des conquérants. » Je ne vois aucune

raison de douter de la véracité de cette assertion, et je n'en vois pas davantage à ne point reconnaître que les horreurs de l'explosion (qu'il faut distinguer de l'explosion elle-même) peuvent être précisément attribuées au long sentiment d'humiliation entretenu par ces fières allures de conquérants.

« Nous ne pouvons récolter que ce que nous
» avons semé; la violence appelle la violence,
» et même pis. »

Je déplore ces horreurs autant que qui que ce soit, bien que je sente profondément combien il est facile de les expliquer et de leur trouver des antécédents. Mais je réproouve bien plus encore, l'esprit de représailles et de ven-

geance qui s'est emparé de toute notre population, et qui est d'autant plus blessant qu'il contraste davantage avec nos mœurs et nos habitudes. Cette guerre des Indes m'apparaît donc sous un aspect hideux, sans aucune des excuses qui souvent légitiment la guerre. Ce qui me permet de rappeler ce vers du poète latin :

Bella geri placuit nullos habitura triumphos.

D'ailleurs, comme Anglais, je ne puis me dispenser d'apprécier les sentiments de la population anglaise, et je dois constater que bien qu'exprimant son opinion avec moins de force, la majeure partie de la nation condamne l'aveugle férocité que détermina chez nous la

première impression. Je ne fais donc que devancer le jugement de l'avenir, en disant que le gouvernement anglais a mérité en cette occasion les plus graves reproches, soit qu'il ait sympathisé avec ces dispositions féroces, soit qu'il les ait tolérées comme utiles, soit qu'il n'ait pas eu le courage de les réprimer. Il a dégradé l'Angleterre par une semblable conduite ; et, malheureusement, ici comme dans d'autres occasions, il n'y a pas eu dissentiment entre le gouvernement et la nation. Le blâme qui revient au premier s'applique également à la seconde, car si elle avait eu, à cet égard, quelques principes de saine morale et qu'elle eût pris le courage de les formuler, les sentiments qui se sont fait jour n'auraient pas eu si longtemps la liberté de se répandre.

Il est légitime de demander justice des désordres qui ont été commis ; et on pourrait sans doute obtenir à cet égard une satisfaction convenable. Mais cela deviendra bien difficile, si le plan de n'accorder aucun quartier est adopté, et si les Cipayes tombent en défendant leur vie. Une telle politique se détruit elle-même. Mais si l'on préfère à une vengeance militaire le parti de la justice, que l'on suivrait avec toute la solennité voulue, alors il faut que le jugement soit impartial. Il faut que justice soit faite des Cipayes, mais qu'elle le soit aussi des Européens, civils ou militaires, qui se sont souillés par des excès. Nous souhaitons que cette justice soit indulgente et miséricordieuse pour tous. Mais si les préjugés des classes en possession de la domination sont trop forts pour per-

mettre ce dernier parti, s'ils sont partagés surtout par notre gouverneur général, il faut alors que la justice soit également inflexible. S'il n'y a nulle merci pour le Cipaye, qu'il n'y en ait aucune pour l'Européen coupable ! Ce ne sont pas seulement la femme et les enfants anglais qui doivent être vengés, mais aussi la femme et les enfants hindous. Ce ne sont pas seulement quelques ladies et quelques gentlemen blessés dans leur orgueil national ou dans leurs préjugés de race qui doivent obtenir satisfaction, mais ce sont les opprimés de toute nation et de tout rang qui doivent recevoir une réparation solennelle. Tel est le véritable aspect de la question, pour tous ceux qui sont capables de sentir les obligations morales, sans se laisser

aveugler par les présomptueuses suggestions de l'orgueil outragé.

Du reste, l'état de l'opinion s'est bien modifié chez nous. Dans le premier moment, on s'était laissé exalter à un point qu'une réflexion plus mûre ne pouvait sanctionner, et il a fallu reculer. La question une fois soulevée, nous avons péniblement senti la faiblesse de notre cause, et cette conviction s'est trahie par les efforts que l'on a faits pour produire, à l'appui de notre occupation de l'Inde, des raisons plus élevées que celles dont on s'était contenté jusqu'alors. Cependant j'avoue que le langage actuel, bien que semblant inspiré par des raisons meilleures, me révolte plus que l'ancien. Nous gardons l'Inde en vue d'intérêts po-

litiques et commerciaux ; nous l'avons exploitée comme une dépendance de haute valeur à ces deux points de vue. Voilà la stricte vérité. Maintenant que notre empire est près de sa chute, alléguer, pour le conserver, des motifs moraux et chrétiens qui n'ont jamais influencé précédemment notre politique, c'est tenir une conduite bien suspecte. Je crois que si un tel langage est sincère pour beaucoup de gens, il n'est employé qu'à titre d'expédient par beaucoup d'autres qui n'en ont jamais usé jusqu'à présent, et qui n'ont pas envie de s'en servir à l'avenir. Toutefois, lorsqu'il est sincère, j'apprécie toute sa valeur, bien que je sente avec regret que je ne puis rien attendre de ceux qui le tiennent. Cependant mes conclusions pourraient être adoptées par quelques-uns d'entre

eux, si, convaincus par les considérations intellectuelles, ils n'éprouvaient pas de répugnance morale. Mais leurs principes les éloignent de moi. Et je ne puis tirer de leur langage que cette importante conclusion, que pour eux comme pour moi les exigences de la morale doivent passer avant celles de la politique, et que ce n'est ni par orgueil ni pour l'honneur et la puissance de l'Angleterre, qu'ils veulent forcer l'Inde à la soumission, mais bien dans l'intérêt de ce pays lui-même ; cet intérêt suprême étant en même temps le devoir de l'Angleterre. Or, quand l'intérêt du plus faible est apprécié par le plus fort sous un aspect si conforme à sa puissance et à son orgueil ; quand le devoir du plus fort se confond à ce point avec les vues de son ambition ; s'il s'agit de particuliers, il est

de droit commun de recourir au jugement d'un tiers, afin que le plus fort ne se trouve pas en même temps juge et partie. Je crois que ce principe garde toute sa valeur, quand il s'agit de différents entre nations, et que rien ne peut mieux nous éclairer dans cette question.

Ceci m'amène naturellement au principal objet de mon travail, et je passe à l'énoncé de la politique que, selon moi, l'Angleterre doit se faire un devoir d'adopter envers l'Inde. Elle est très-simple; elle consiste à nous retirer sitôt que nous aurons fait les dispositions nécessaires pour sauvegarder la vie et la propriété des Européens, et assurer, par un ensemble de mesures efficaces, l'indépendance et le bon gouvernement de ce pays.

Voilà l'énoncé le plus succinct de la solution que je propose. Je le mets ainsi en évidence, afin qu'il soit intelligible pour tous. La grande affaire, c'est notre retraite, le renoncement à notre domination. Quant aux moyens effectifs, ils ne sont pas de ma compétence. Mais, les mesures nécessaires pour assurer à l'empire que nous devons abandonner tous les avantages possibles, donnant lieu à des considérations très-importantes, je désire en dire quelques mots.

Il me paraît que, dans une semblable occurrence, nous ne devons pas agir isolément. Quoique nous n'en ayons jamais tenu compte, notre meilleur titre à la possession de l'Inde fut toujours d'y représenter la civilisation de

l'Occident, et d'être, par cela même, investis d'un caractère de protectorat. Réclamons-nous de ce titre au moment de notre retraite ; et obtenons, comme cela est facile, de toutes les grandes puissances européennes, que l'empire par nous abandonné ne soit considéré d'aucune d'elles comme un champ ouvert à leur ambition, et qu'aucune puissance étrangère au système européen ne puisse s'y arroger un droit auquel nous renonçons nous-mêmes.

Cela posé, il serait convenable, dans l'état actuel des choses, de nous associer quelques autres nations, pour fixer l'arrangement des relations entre l'Inde et l'Europe occidentale ; en comprenant dans celle-ci toutes les populations d'origine européenne, tant américaines

qu'australienne. Trois nations me semblent désignées à cet effet, comme ayant avec nous des établissements dans l'Inde : ce sont la France, le Portugal et le Danemark. Je voudrais y voir ajouter la Sardaigne, comme représentant la cinquième grande nationalité européenne, la nation italienne. Et comme ici, nous avons à traiter avec l'islamisme et le brahminisme, je voudrais faire appel au sultan de Turquie, chef actuel de l'islamisme, pour obtenir sa coopération à cette grande œuvre; tandis que dans l'Inde même je choisirais quelque brahme éminent qui compléterait dignement la commission mixte ainsi formée.

Cette commission ne différerait pas, en principe, de celle qui a été instituée pour régler la

question des principautés danubiennes. Elle agirait de concert avec le gouvernement de l'Inde, et déterminerait les relations à établir entre elle et l'Occident. Elle pourrait aisément constituer le germe d'un protectorat européen ; et en s'autorisant de la conduite désintéressée de l'Angleterre, elle serait en mesure de faire accepter ses conseils aux différents gouvernements hindous. Ainsi, tous les intérêts seraient sauvegardés, et l'on donnerait une juste satisfaction, dans ce qu'elle a de vrai, à l'opinion qui représente la cause de l'Angleterre comme celle de la civilisation, et sa défaite, comme le signal d'une rétrogradation vers le désordre et la barbarie.

Quel que soit le jugement que l'on porte sur

le plan que je viens d'exposer, les points essentiels de cette politique légitime ne sauraient en être ébranlés. Je les résume : mettre fin à l'occupation anglaise; assurer l'indépendance de l'Inde; instituer de salutaires relations commerciales et morales entre l'Occident et l'Orient. Si je ne m'appesantis pas davantage sur l'établissement d'un protectorat, c'est à cause des susceptibilités nationales qu'une telle institution pourrait exciter, dans l'état actuel des choses.

La politique que je propose d'adopter, paraîtra sans doute effrayante : elle est cependant bien naturelle. Elle réunit tellement en sa faveur toutes les présomptions, que je pourrais me borner à laisser à mes adversaires le soin d'en

réfuter la rationalité, ou la tâche plus difficile encore de prouver que l'occupation des Indes est un devoir pour l'Angleterre. Mais on a mis en avant un argument, ou mieux, une proposition, que je dois relever d'abord, bien qu'elle diffère de toutes les autres par la forme plutôt que par le fond. L'évêque d'Oxford nous annonce hardiment que « Dieu nous ayant confié l'Inde pour la tenir en son nom, nous n'avons pas le droit d'y renoncer. » La réalité d'une telle mission ne peut être établie que par les faits historiques, mais certes ils ne sont point en sa faveur. Loin de là; et si je me plaçais pour un moment au point de vue théologique, qui est celui de mon illustre antagoniste, après un scrupuleux examen des procédés de notre conquête à son origine et dans ses envahisse-

ments successifs, je serais porté à supposer que nous tenons cette mission d'une puissance totalement différente ; et ces paroles se présentent naturellement à mon esprit : « Je vous donnerai toutes ces choses, si en vous prosternant devant moi vous m'adorez. »

Moins familier avec les desseins du ciel que notre évêque, moins présomptueux, mais peut-être aussi, moins politique, M. Gladstone ne peut entièrement passer sous silence cette question des voies d'acquisition. Mais il établit complaisamment que ce n'est point de cela qu'il s'agit. « Il ne s'agit pas, dit-il, de rechercher si notre occupation était ou non légitime, et si nos mains étaient pures ; mais tout est de savoir quelles obligations nous avons contractées en-

vers deux cents millions d'hommes environ qui subissent notre domination dans l'Inde, et envers Dieu qui veille sur eux et sur nous. Peut-être nous sommes-nous posés un peu témérairement et présomptueusement comme tuteurs, entre Dieu tout-puissant et deux cents millions de ses créatures ? Mais enfin c'est un devoir absolu pour nous que d'accomplir la tâche que nous avons assumée. »

D'abord, ce langage vient un peu tard ; car jamais, jusqu'à ce jour, ce devoir de tutelle n'a été proclamé, — cela est constant. Or si c'est à ce titre que nous occupons l'Inde, nous sommes solennellement tenus de la bien gouverner, et les obligations qu'entraîne un semblable devoir sont telles, lorsqu'on les com-

prend bien, que je crois fort que, s'il fallait les accomplir toutes, notre gouvernement et notre nation renonceraient volontiers à une possession exigeant une responsabilité si étendue et si compliquée. Loin de nous ingénier à trouver des raisons pour conserver l'Inde, nous chercherions, au contraire, des motifs pour l'abandonner. Mais en la quittant, nous ne devons pas nous soustraire aux obligations solennelles qui reposent sur nous. Nous l'avons occupée avec témérité et présomption : nous ne devons l'abandonner que de sang-froid et avec une abnégation complète. Notre premier soin doit être le bien de ce pays. Agissons comme des hommes, et non comme des enfants en colère ; que la conscience de nos fautes ne nous en fasse pas commettre de plus grandes

encore. Comme un médecin inhabile, nous avons contrarié la marche de la nature et arrêté son action salutaire : il nous faudra les plus grands efforts d'habileté pour réparer cette erreur et en détourner les conséquences. Je ne saurais penser que le sentiment de leurs torts reste sans effet sur mes compatriotes. Je puis énergiquement blâmer la conduite du gouvernement et l'acquiescement que la nation a paru y donner, mais je ne voudrais pour rien déprécier ce peuple, et je suis persuadé qu'il écoutera tout appel fait à ses sentiments élevés. La nation qui a produit Milton, Cromwell et les soldats de Cromwell, comprendra toujours ce qu'il peut y avoir de noble, de grand et de désintéressé dans une action. Que ne puis-je la voir avec Milton *« s'éveiller comme*

l'homme fort après son sommeil ! » Si, après ces deux siècles douloureux, nous pouvions entendre quelques échos de cette puissante voix, animée de tant de force pour exprimer ses nobles sentiments et pour servir d'organe à ceux de ses compatriotes, peut-être serions-nous illuminés d'un peu de cet enthousiasme qui se manifesta chez le poète par les plus éclatantes beautés, et chez l'homme d'État par les plus hautes actions!

Mais revenons à notre évêque et à notre politique. Il faut convenir que leur langage n'est, au fond, qu'une futilité solennelle; que leur commission divine, leur charge de gardiens d'âmes ne peuvent avoir de valeur qu'auprès de leurs amis et ne présentent pas une base

sérieuse d'argumentation. Ils déplacent la question du simple domaine de la politique et de la moralité humaines, pour la transporter dans des régions où elle devient complètement insoluble. Et il faut au moraliste, comme à l'homme d'État, un terrain plus accessible et des arguments plus réels que ceux proposés par ces messieurs. Qui pourra juger en dernier ressort si leur tutelle a véritablement la sanction de Dieu? Rien, je le répète, n'indique une telle mission, et sa concordance évidente avec nos désirs, nos sentiments et nos intérêts supposés, aurait dû nous faire rougir de la mettre en avant. Je n'en dirai pas plus sur ce sujet, car je souhaite surtout de n'irriter personne.

La politique que je conseille est la politique naturelle; il y a de tels arguments en sa faveur que je laisse à mes adversaires le soin de la réfuter, s'ils le peuvent. Développez seulement la carte du monde, et voyez la position relative des deux pays. Il y a là un des plus forts arguments qu'on puisse trouver contre leur union. Évaluez ensuite leurs populations respectives, leur différence de climat, de langue, de religion (1), de mœurs, de coutumes,

(1) J'emprunte au *Spectateur* du samedi 7 novembre, journal défavorable à mes opinions, le passage suivant : « Avec ces différences essentielles dans les sentiments, dans les idées et jusque dans le langage, comment serait-il possible aux deux races d'arriver à s'entendre ? Nous pouvons difficilement apprécier la culpabilité morale de

et vous trouverez encore là des présomptions en ma faveur. Demandez-vous dans quelles conditions une conquête est justifiable et admissible, et vous verrez qu'aucune de ces conditions ne se trouve réalisée dans le cas présent. Que vous traitiez cette question au point de vue moral ou politique, je ne crains pas votre réponse. Supposez un instant, par un léger effort d'abstraction, que nous soyons encore au moment où les relations commerciales de l'Angleterre avec l'Inde se sont changées

nos adversaires, car leur éducation et leur religion approuvent leur fanatisme destructif, et justifient leur plus barbare conduite. A leurs yeux, le massacre des femmes et des enfants se trouve glorifié par une sanction religieuse. »

en relations politiques de conquête et d'occupation (ce retour vers le passé n'est guère difficile), quel serait alors votre jugement? Pensez-vous que le devoir, l'obligation morale de la Grande-Bretagne serait de s'emparer de cet immense empire?

Les premiers motifs de cette entreprise sont bien connus et n'exigent point un examen trop approfondi. Ils résultaient de notre rivalité avec la France et de notre désir d'agrandissement. Dans cette lutte entre les deux puissances occidentales, les intérêts des immenses populations indigènes ne furent pas un instant pris en considération, et ils ne l'ont pas été davantage depuis que l'issue de la lutte ayant donné gain de cause à l'Angleterre, notre conquête

s'est trouvée, par là, consommée. La vérité de cette proposition ne saurait être discutée.

L'Inde ne menaçait la civilisation occidentale, ni même orientale, d'aucun danger. Aucune armée envahissante n'était sortie de ce vaste pays pour conquérir les États voisins. L'histoire entière témoigne, au contraire, que, comme l'Italie moderne, l'Inde fut toujours victime plutôt que bourreau.

Enfin, il est impossible ici de mettre en avant les arguments dont on a étayé l'occupation de l'Amérique et de l'Australie par les nations plus policées. Il ne s'agit plus, en effet, d'une vaste étendue de pays à peine peuplée, dont les in-

digènes sont incapables d'exploiter les richesses méconnues.

En résumé, nous défions qui que ce soit de trouver un seul fait sur lequel on puisse fonder et appuyer la légitimité de l'occupation de l'Inde par une puissance occidentale. Le renversement de l'empire mogol avait, il est vrai, bouleversé les relations intérieures et donné lieu à la plus déplorable confusion ; mais ce motif ne saurait être regardé aujourd'hui comme valable. Toutes les nations de l'Europe moderne ont traversé de pareilles phases, et toutes ont également rejeté la pensée d'une intervention violente pour arrêter le cours naturel des révolutions. Cet état de trouble explique le succès de notre entreprise, mais ne le justifie pas. Ni

un mauvais gouvernement, ni un état continuel de guerre intestine n'autorise l'usurpation. Naples a un gouvernement proverbialement défectueux, le Mexique est en révolution permanente, sans que nous nous croyons pour cela tenus d'y intervenir.

Je suis convaincu que tous les principes du droit international sont opposés à notre occupation, à moins que, modifiant légèrement ce que Heeren a dit de notre conduite à Ceylan, nous ne demandions s'il n'existe pas aux Indes un autre droit des gens que celui de l'Europe? Si l'on veut soutenir ouvertement qu'une telle différence existe, et que ce qui règle les relations des États indépendants en Europe n'est pas obligatoire aux Indes, alors qu'on dise aussi quels

sont les points essentiels de cette différence, et sur quelles bases elle repose. Est-ce sur la prétendue supériorité de la race européenne ou sur la barbarie comparative de la population hindoue ?

— Écoutez ce que dit Burke à ce sujet : « Cette multitude d'hommes ne consiste pas en une populace abjecte et barbare, encore moins en des hordes sauvages, comme les Guaranies et les Chiquitos, qui errent sur les bords incultes de l'Amazone et de la Plata ; mais en un peuple civilisé depuis des siècles, cultivant tous les arts de la vie policée à l'époque où nous errions encore dans les forêts. Ils ont eu (et les débris en subsistent encore) des princes pleins d'autorité, de dignité et d'opulence ; on rencontre chez eux des chefs de tribus et de nation. On y trouve un sacerdoce antique et vénérable, dé-

positaire des lois et des sciences, guide du peuple pendant la vie et sa consolation au moment de la mort; une noblesse d'une grande célébrité, d'une haute antiquité; un nombre infini de cités dont la population et le commerce n'est surpassé par aucune ville d'Europe; des commerçants, des banquiers dont les capitaux ont jadis rivalisé avec la banque d'Angleterre, et dont le crédit a plus d'une fois rétabli un État ébranlé en sauvant son gouvernement au milieu de la guerre et de la désolation; des millions de manufacturiers et d'artisans ingénieux; des millions de laboureurs intelligents. On y trouve toutes les religions professées : le brahminisme, l'islamisme, le christianisme oriental et occidental. » — (Burke, Discours

sur le bill des Indes orientales, volume IV, page 18.)

Si au contraire les principes du droit international, fruits de l'expérience et de la raison, sont les mêmes en Orient qu'en Occident, sauf la différence de forme nécessitée par la diversité de mœurs, j'affirme en toute confiance qu'aucun homme d'Etat anglais ne pourra justifier notre occupation violente de l'Inde.

Cela est vrai, dira-t-on, mais la chose est faite, et sans chercher à la justifier, nous tâchons d'en tirer parti, sans nous occuper constamment à résoudre de tels problèmes. Je reconnais qu'il y a quelque chose de sérieux au

fond de ce langage. Mais alors il faudrait démontrer que tout ce que nous avons fait a été ratifié par le temps, et que les vaincus se sont complètement mêlés avec les conquérants (1),

(1) Je ne signalerais pas le discours de lord Shaftesbury ; mais il contient quelques matériaux précieux, et il a d'ailleurs un certain intérêt, comme manifeste du chef d'un parti religieux important. Je dois surtout exprimer le regret qu'un pareil discours ait été considéré comme spécialement anglais. J'emprunterai à l'orateur ce qu'il appelle « de solennelles et profondes paroles, » et l'on verra qu'elles apportent beaucoup de jour dans la question : « De tous les maux produits dans l'Inde par cet état de choses, le plus grand, le plus difficile à éviter, c'est le sentiment d'intense et terrible exécution que les Européens éprouvent pour les hommes de couleur. Il sera presque impossible de rien faire de longtemps

ou sont au moins tout prêts de leur être incorporés ; il faudrait nous faire voir que si le sentiment d'intérêt commun n'a pas entièrement éteint le sentiment d'humiliation nationale, il tend du moins à le faire disparaître. Ou seulement on devrait nous donner l'espérance que cette union pourra s'opérer dans un avenir si éloigné qu'il puisse être ! Certes, voilà bien des concessions, et je place mes adversaires dans une situation on ne peut plus favorable. Néanmoins je ne les crains pas. On aurait encore pu

pour le bien de cette nation. Je maintiens qu'il sera absolument impossible d'élever leur position et de leur faire une situation convenable, tant est immense la haine que leur portent les Européens. »

soutenir une semblable thèse il y a quelques mois ; et alors un observateur superficiel aurait pu se laisser persuader que la puissance anglaise était toujours en voie d'accroissement dans l'Inde. Mais les événements actuels ont démontré à tout le monde, à ceux qui repoussent notre domination comme à ceux qui la soutiennent avec fanatisme, qu'une telle fusion est impossible. Un gouvernement despotique, appuyé sur le sabre, telle est la seule perspective qui reste aux Hindous, pendant de longues générations, s'ils succombent dans la lutte qu'ils viennent d'entreprendre. L'idée d'une domination militaire devrait répugner à tout véritable Anglais.

J'ai prié mes lecteurs de faire pendant quel-

ques instants abstraction du présent, et de se reporter au temps où les Anglais n'avaient fait aucune conquête dans l'Inde. Cette abstraction devient inutile aujourd'hui, car nous en arrivons au point de nous poser de nouveau cette question, qu'on s'efforce inutilement de résoudre depuis un siècle : Devons-nous conquérir l'Inde ? — Or à cette époque, les populations indigènes n'avaient pas encore goûté de la domination anglo-française, et l'intervention d'une puissance européenne pouvait être accueillie par elles. Mais aujourd'hui que notre domination, souillée par des excès de tous genres, est universellement reconnue comme incompatible avec l'indépendance d'une partie quelconque de la péninsule, les Indiens rejettent, à juste titre, ce qu'ils accueillirent alors,

et ils préféreraient actuellement tous les risques d'un gouvernement sans stabilité à la certitude du despotisme étranger.

Je mets donc au défi tous ceux qui soutiennent notre occupation dans l'Inde, de produire un seul principe capable de justifier notre établissement initial ; car ce principe devrait pouvoir légitimer envers un État européen quelconque, une conduite analogue à celle que nous avons tenue dans l'Hindostan. Si l'on refuse d'établir la discussion sur ce terrain, il faudra énumérer les motifs de ce refus.

Nous imposons à la Perse l'observation des traités, comme s'il s'agissait d'un État euro-

péen, notre égal. Nous exigeons de la Chine l'observation des formalités les plus scrupuleuses du droit international de l'Europe. La grande Péninsule, placée entre ces deux puissances, doit également faire partie de la communauté des nations, et elle devrait pouvoir nous forcer d'obéir à nos propres principes.

En résumé, nous avons mal agi en nous emparant de l'Inde ; nous n'avons rien fait pour racheter cette faute, et il ne nous reste qu'une alternative : restituer et réparer par tous les moyens en notre pouvoir le dommage que nous avons causé. Tel est l'ensemble de mes arguments. La première partie en est acceptée par le plus grand nombre de ceux qui ont traité ce sujet, mais la seconde est rejetée par une ma-

jorité aussi certaine. J'en juge du moins par ce qui a été produit sur cette question.

Je vais examiner un à un tous les motifs de ce rejet, et j'espère y répondre d'une manière convaincante; je laisserai de côté, cependant, la raison par trop primitive de la supériorité de force, et la déclaration par trop immorale qui, sans appel et sans examen préalable, proclame que nous garderons l'Inde jusqu'à ce qu'une plus grande puissance que la nôtre nous l'ait enlevée. Il y a quatre motifs présentables dont on peut appuyer d'une manière plus ou moins plausible le maintien de notre domination; ce sont les motifs relatifs au commerce, à la politique, à la civilisation et à la religion. — Les deux premiers m'offrent peu de difficulté. Je

n'ignore ni ne veut diminuer leur influence pratique ; mais puisqu'ils ont été abandonnés par les plus consciencieux de mes adversaires, il me paraît inutile de m'y arrêter. Il est généralement admis, par ceux auxquels je fais allusion, que l'intérêt de l'Angleterre n'est pas un motif suffisant pour maintenir l'Inde sous notre domination, si cet intérêt est égoïste, politiquement et commercialement.

Nos relations commerciales avec ce pays existaient avant la conquête, et continueraient après son abandon. Si elles avaient excité des sentiments défavorables à notre égard, nous aurions rencontré plus d'obstacles dans notre entreprise d'occupation. Et il n'y a pas la moindre probabilité que, si nous renoncions à

cette domination, de quelque manière que s'effectue la séparation, la population indienne veuille se séquestrer et renoncer à tout commerce avec nous, ni avec aucune des autres nations occidentales. De deux choses l'une, ou nous serons expulsés, ou nous nous retirerons volontairement : si nous sommes chassés, il est peu à craindre qu'aucune autre nation soit tentée de reprendre notre partie ; si nous nous éloignons librement, les Indiens seront bien convaincus qu'après une telle démarche, aucun peuple ne pourra moralement entreprendre quelque chose contre eux. Sans tenir compte des garanties qui pourraient résulter des traités, le fait aurait par lui-même une irrésistible puissance pour empêcher toute tentative contraire. Le commerce de l'Angleterre trouvera

autant d'avantages chez une nation indépendante, fût-elle hostile, que chez un peuple d'esclaves. Les États-Unis d'Amérique en sont un exemple.

Quant au point de vue politique, si l'on prétend que la possession de l'Inde est indispensable à notre puissance, essentielle à notre prestige, et que, dans l'intérêt de notre prépondérance internationale, nous ne pouvons y renoncer, il me sera encore facile de répondre à cet argument, que l'on a, du reste, déjà reconnu comme insuffisant. On peut dire que, loin de faire notre force, l'Inde est pour nous une source de faiblesse politique. Supposons que la révolte actuelle eût éclaté pendant que nous étions en guerre avec la Russie. Le fardeau

n'eût-il pas excédé nos forces ? Et même, en dehors d'une telle complication, il est évident que l'Angleterre ayant toutes ses forces militaires engagées dans une contrée aussi éloignée, doit moins peser dans les conseils de l'Europe. Non ! les colonies et les dépendances lointaines n'augmentent pas notre force : c'est là une vaine illusion ; elles sont une charge pour nos finances, et elles épuisent nos ressources militaires. L'Angleterre est puissante par elle-même : et plutôt malgré ses colonies, que par elles. Ce sont des ouvrages avancés qui nous gênent, et que nous devons abandonner pour concentrer notre action. Nous étions grands avant qu'aucun aventurier n'eût rêvé cette conquête de l'Inde. Nous serons plus grands encore, quand un gouvernement plein de force

aura donné à l'énergie nationale une direction salutaire, et une plus noble impulsion.

La troisième raison alléguée, est l'intérêt de la civilisation. On prétend que délivrée de notre étreinte, l'Inde rétrogradera vers la barbarie et le désordre. Cette assertion ne me paraît pas d'un grand poids. Je ne suis pas très-versé dans la littérature et les antiquités religieuses de l'Inde, mais le peu que j'en sais me permet de fonder mon jugement historique sur une base solide. J'accepte pleinement ce que dit Burke dans le passage que j'ai cité plus haut. J'éprouve un profond respect pour cette antique théocratie, en présence de laquelle notre ordre social semble né d'hier. Je suis convaincu, qu'il serait insensé de hâter la décadence de cette vieille

société, et de lui imposer prématurément la civilisation progressive, mais encore anarchique, de notre Occident. Attendons patiemment que notre édifice social ait atteint quelques proportions harmoniques, pour le proposer comme modèle aux nations moins avancées. N'en doutons pas, dès que le monde occidental sera arrivé en possession d'une organisation rationnelle, il influera rapidement sur l'antique civilisation de l'Asie.

Alors même que la retraite de l'Angleterre devrait arrêter momentanément l'influence des idées européennes et des améliorations industrielles; quand l'établissement des chemins de fer et des télégraphes électriques devrait être suspendu dans l'Inde, j'applaudirais encore à

ce résultat. Les moyens de communication qui y existent aujourd'hui sont assez rapides et assez secrets; nous l'avons éprouvé à nos dépens. Les merveilles de l'industrie moderne tendent à décomposer toutes les conceptions mentales de ces peuples relativement arriérés; et ce résultat est tout à fait inopportun pour le temps actuel (1). Quelles que soient les croyances reli-

(1) J'emprunte encore une citation au discours de lord Shaftesbury. M. Kennedy, missionnaire à Bénarès, écrit ces remarquables paroles : « Quelle peut être la cause de toute cette frénésie déployée contre nous ? Certainement notre gouvernement les a cruellement opprimés. Mais ce n'est point là la raison alléguée par ce peuple. Ce que j'ai entendu dire à plusieurs, c'est que tout notre système, nos missions, nos écoles, nos che-

gieuses admises en ce pays, nous devons les laisser subsister, tant qu'elles sont capables de se maintenir. L'activité des hommes d'État et des philosophes peut amplement s'exercer ailleurs ; et il y a réellement quelque chose d'absurde dans la manière dont nous nous conduisons aux Indes à cet égard. Aucun gouvernement ne tient plus que le nôtre à l'ordre actuel ; aucun ne se pique davantage de se rattacher aux précédents, aucun n'est plus fier « de la lente expansion de la liberté. » Or ce même gouvernement procède à l'égard des vieilles théocraties in-

mins de fer, nos télégraphes électriques, etc., détruisent leur religion, et qu'ils ne peuvent plus supporter un tel état de choses. »

diennes, comme un bouillant organe révolutionnaire. En voyant les mêmes hommes, conservateurs en Angleterre, et subversifs aux Indes, on ne peut s'empêcher de penser, que l'égoïsme ne soit, dans les deux cas, leur véritable mobile.

Il faut sérieusement éviter toute illusion, sur cette question de civilisation. Les Espagnols jadis, forts de la supériorité de leurs croyances religieuses et de leur civilisation plus avancée, envahirent les empires du Mexique et du Pérou. Ils imposèrent, le fer à la main, leur christianisme et leur ordre social, pour satisfaire aux véritables motifs qui les animaient, la soif de l'or et l'amour de la domination. Aujourd'hui, l'opinion condamne unanimement leur conduite, et flétrit, non-seulement la cruauté et l'avarice

de ces conquérants, mais encore leur esprit de croisade, leur manque de respect et de sympathie pour les institutions des vaincus, et la destruction d'une civilisation intéressante, qui fait considérer avec mépris celle qu'ils y ont substituée. Qui pourrait dire que le jugement de l'avenir ne sera pas aussi sévère à notre égard, et que dans quelques siècles, nous ne serons point universellement condamnés pour avoir tenté d'imposer à l'Inde notre civilisation?

Nous voici arrivés à la quatrième raison, la question religieuse. Ici se résume tout ce qu'il peut y avoir de vraiment respectable dans les désirs des classes supérieures. Toutefois, bien que je respecte de tels sentiments, je ne puis y adhérer.

L'espérance de convertir l'Inde au christianisme n'a jamais influé, jusqu'ici, d'une manière bien notable sur notre politique. Des sociétés de missionnaires recrutent des hommes plus ou moins aptes à ce service. Mais tous ceux qui ont coopéré à ces missions peuvent affirmer, que leur résultat est tout à fait au-dessous des efforts tentés dans ce sens. L'énergie de notre nation n'est poussée dans cette direction par aucune impulsion spontanée. Or il y a peu de raisons pour croire que l'avenir vienne à démentir le passé. On pourrait sans doute faire un grand effort, mais il ne sera jamais que passager, faute d'être basé sur aucune conviction vraiment populaire. Le résultat final sera donc, comme toujours, que quand le moment de réfléchir et de peser sera venu, on reculera devant

une collision avec le système religieux des indigènes, Mahométans ou Hindous.

Le passé nous édifie pleinement sur le résultat obtenu par les missionnaires. Les nations chrétiennes de l'Occident sont, depuis un temps considérable, en rapport avec les populations orientales, commercialement ou politiquement. Les croyances chrétiennes leur ont été présentées par des agents catholiques et protestants, sous toute espèce de formes : comme mode de vie, comme système de culte, et comme doctrine religieuse. Sous aucune forme, par aucun organe, on n'a pu les y faire progresser ; et je me fais l'écho des observations et des convictions les plus compétentes, en affirmant que, l'acceptation du christianisme par les Indiens,

n'est présumable dans aucun temps que l'on puisse apprécier.

Je pourrais, à ce sujet, prendre une position négative; et, considérant notre pays à ce point de vue, dire avec Coleridge que nous devons regarder froidement toutes ces entreprises de missions; l'extension du christianisme devant être de bien peu d'importance, puisque son action chez nous est devenue si faible, et que son centre est si dépourvu de vigueur. En voyant ici l'inanité des convictions religieuses, il faut reconnaître que c'est une étrange illusion que de se croire capable, comme nation ou comme gouvernement (j'excepte le cas de zèle individuel, un homme se trouvant animé de l'esprit de saint Paul), de porter chez d'autres

peuples une religion et une morale si peu solides à nos yeux, et que nous voyons chaque jour attaquées par la presse actuelle.

Il y a aux Indes deux religions principales, le brahmanisme et le mahométisme. Toutes deux sont pleines de vie et nous laissent peu d'accès. Si, dans ses attaques contre le brahmanisme, notre missionnaire met en avant le côté philosophique du christianisme, l'esprit subtil du brahme accepte la lutte avec joie, et lui oppose une contre-philosophie. D'où, matière infinie à discussion, mais pas de résultat. Si au contraire, le missionnaire chrétien se borne à exposer historiquement sa religion, et à faire appel à la conscience, il s'épargne la douleur d'une défaite, mais l'effet produit reste nul;

car le système religieux de l'Inde ne laisse aucun besoin à satisfaire ; ce qui serait la première condition de succès pour une autre religion voulant s'y faire accepter. Ce n'est plus ici la lutte du christianisme avec le polythéisme gréco-romain, profondément ébranlé, d'abord par la culture philosophique, et par la souffrance morale des masses. Dans l'Inde, la constitution théocratique a encore toute la force que donne une association ancienne et héréditaire ; et, cette force, qui, dans le monde romain, ne fut détruite qu'au bout de quatre siècles et par l'envahissement des barbares, est un obstacle insurmontable pour le missionnaire, et qui fait désespérer du succès de son entreprise.

Quant au second système religieux avec lequel nous sommes en contact aux Indes, je n'ai que quelques mots à en dire. L'arrêt de l'histoire est, sur ce point, définitif et irrécusable : le christianisme n'a pu faire aucune impression sur le mahométisme, et il y a même renoncé. Les deux monothéismes se sont rencontrés au moyen âge, et l'issue de la lutte est assez connue. Le catholicisme grec succomba; et tout ce que le catholicisme romain put faire fut de soutenir une guerre défensive. Aujourd'hui, chacune de ces croyances se prétend en possession exclusive de la vérité; chacune d'elles est réciproquement rejetée par une partie de l'espèce humaine, et toutes deux subsistent à côté l'une de l'autre, comme pour témoigner de l'exagération de leurs prétentions mutuelles.

Si le but que l'on se propose est de répandre la religion et la civilisation, il n'y a que trois manières efficaces de l'atteindre. On peut les propager en chassant et exterminant toutes les populations fermement attachées aux croyances et aux mœurs que l'on désire remplacer; mais cette méthode est inapplicable au cas qui nous occupe. On peut encore procéder par assimilation graduelle et incorporation des peuples conquis; tel fut le système de l'ancienne Rome. Mais, à cette époque même, il ne réussit que pour la partie occidentale de la domination romaine, et il échoua dans l'Orient. Ce serait donc rêver que de vouloir l'appliquer aujourd'hui aux Indes. La troisième méthode est celle de la persuasion; mais elle doit, pour être efficace, rester pure de toute contrainte. Si on

la combine avec la conquête , on peut être assuré de l'insuccès, d'après la réaction violente qu'elle ne manquerait pas de provoquer. Telle est la seule voie qui nous reste , si nous persistons à vouloir garder ce pays.

Malgré l'importance de toutes ces considérations, je ne puis y insister davantage, ayant à dire des choses que je ne puis taire, quoiqu'il doive m'en coûter. Je rejette donc les prétextes ci-dessus examinés, ainsi que l'obligation solennelle que l'on veut nous imposer, en tant qu'Église, de christianiser les Indes. Pour de nombreux motifs politiques, et par l'inutilité des efforts tentés dans ce sens, on ne peut adopter un semblable projet. Mais je soutiens en outre que, loin d'être un bonheur, ce serait un préju-

dice immense, pour les Hindous, que d'adopter le christianisme. Dans tout l'Occident, la foi chrétienne se meurt, surtout comme croyance publique ; car la foi individuelle existe encore pour beaucoup de gens qui pratiquent le culte. Mais l'influence de ce système sur les sentiments, les pensées et les actions des masses n'existe plus. Jadis le catholicisme fut le lien des nations et les tint unies sous sa bannière ; mais il est loin actuellement d'en être encore ainsi. Il a été ruiné par sa propre faiblesse, sans qu'aucune cause extérieure ait provoqué ce déclin, sans qu'aucune autre forme de catholicisme ait surgi pour le remplacer. Sous une forme quelconque, ce culte est désormais profondément incapable d'agir comme moteur de la vie individuelle ou sociale, et surtout de

remplir le but de toute vraie religion. Le catholicisme a rendu les plus grands services dans le passé, mais il n'est plus qu'à l'état de souvenir. Loin de moi cependant la pensée de le déprécier, car je reconnais qu'il pourra encore influencer sur bien des individualités, jusqu'à ce que la nouvelle doctrine, qui doit le remplacer, soit entièrement acceptée.

Puisque le christianisme n'a plus ma foi, et que je ne puis le regarder comme le guide de la conduite privée, ou comme le régulateur de la vie publique, dès lors je dois repousser avec force toute tentative faite pour l'imposer à d'autres nations et pour le propager, même par voie de persuasion, chez des peuples où il existe une organisation religieuse différente.

Dans de telles conditions, je le considère comme pouvant occasionner plus de mal que de bien et devenir un instrument de désordre et de rétrogradation, plutôt qu'un moyen d'ordre et de progrès.

Laissons le système brahmique suivre son cours naturel. Nous pourrions, de cette manière, épargner, aux populations qui s'abritent encore dans son sein et qui restent attachées à ses cérémonies (sans approfondir sa doctrine), la phase religieuse que représente aujourd'hui le christianisme. Nous pourrions alors espérer que, sans partager l'agitation qui accompagne l'évolution religieuse de l'Occident, les peuples de l'Inde accepteraient un jour la nouvelle foi, qui viendrait s'offrir à eux pure de tous les

souvenirs d'abjection et d'esclavage qui ternissent à leurs yeux le christianisme.

J'ai examiné l'une après l'autre chacune des bases sur lesquelles les partisans de notre domination aux Indes s'efforcent d'asseoir leurs prétentions. Prise isolément, chacune d'elles se trouve insuffisante ; et je ne pense pas que leur réunion puisse suppléer à leur inanité respective. Il y a cependant un point de vue que je n'ai pas encore examiné. On accorde que l'origine de notre occupation est illégitime, on ne cherche point à justifier les mesures gouvernementales qui l'ont suivie, et l'on regarde comme douteuse la persistance de notre domination. Mais on prétend qu'en abandonnant l'Inde, nous la laisserons se replonger dans l'état de boulever-

sement où nous l'avons trouvée, et que, dès lors, elle souffrira infiniment plus qu'étant en notre pouvoir. Ce prétexte me semble sans valeur, et je demande avant tout s'il a pour objet de justifier le maintien permanent, ou temporaire de notre autorité. Si c'est, comme je le suppose, du dernier mode qu'il s'agit, qu'on nous fixe la limite de cet exercice ; et si les Indiens supportent encore pendant ce temps notre tutelle, quelle est, approximativement, l'époque à laquelle elle devra cesser ? Nous absorbons déjà tout le gouvernement de ce pays, et nous l'annulerons bien plus encore, si nous parvenons à étouffer la révolte actuelle. Si l'on nous laisse juges du moment opportun pour cette retraite, nous ne l'effectuerons jamais : il y a donc absurdité à nous arroger le droit d'une semblable

décision, et à vouloir régler notre conduite future sur des éventualités incertaines. Depuis un siècle que les Indiens sont en contact avec nous, ils ont beaucoup appris ; et nous pourrions, en nous retirant, les aider dans les difficultés du moment, et diminuer les maux qui résulteraient pour eux d'un pareil changement. Mais nous ne pouvons poser en principe que nous envahirons chaque fois que surgira un mauvais gouvernement. Ils sont nombreux les cas dans lesquels nous nous sommes abstenus d'une pareille intervention.

En réalité, le principal obstacle à l'abandon de l'Inde résulte de l'opinion mal établie des avantages que l'on croit attachés à sa possession, ainsi que du sentiment d'orgueil national

qui nous empêche de reconnaître un insuccès. Quoi ! après un siècle , se retirer et confesser que l'on a mal agi en s'emparant de l'Inde, et que cette malencontreuse conquête portait en elle-même des germes inévitables de destruction. Ce serait, il est vrai, un étrange renversement de l'opinion que nous en avons eue jusqu'à ce jour. Nous nous sommes cependant soumis (et même avec satisfaction), à l'insuccès que nous avons eu en Irlande. Un million cinq cent mille Irlandais sont morts de faim, par la faute évidente d'un gouvernement imprévoyant. La plupart des survivants abandonnent la patrie, comme le constatent les journaux populaires, notamment l'*Exode irlandaise*. Mais l'Irlande est tranquille, et ce résultat fait oublier les moyens que l'on a employés pour l'obtenir.

J'ai de l'ambition pour mon pays, mais non pas une ambition vulgaire. Sa politique l'a placé au premier rang dans les conflits d'intérêts ; il a été entraîné bien loin dans la voie des attaques, et ses succès l'y ont souvent rendu oppressif. Je voudrais maintenant le voir accepter une plus noble politique et entrer le premier dans la voie du repentir, de la réparation et de la modération désintéressée. On nous représente comme glorieuse cette conquête des Indes : elle ne répand cependant sur nos armes et sur nos conseils qu'un éclat bien douteux. Et lorsque, tôt ou tard, l'Inde nous aura été ravie, sa possession ne paraîtra que comme un bien faible épisode de notre histoire. Je passe sous silence la triste célébrité d'hommes tels que Clive et Warren Hastings, et je ne considère

que les meilleurs types de nos généraux victorieux. Leur gloire ne saurait être durable; car pour le soldat la cause fait tout; et notre armée n'est, aux Indes, que l'instrument de l'asservissement d'une nation malheureuse (1). Des

(1) Notre position, en ce pays, me rappelle le jugement de Napiers sur la situation des Français en Espagne : « Dans un langage étranger, il (J. Bonaparte) exige qu'une race d'hommes ardents et superbes accepte un gouvernement qu'elle ne comprend pas. Ses espérances de succès reposent sur les armes d'un frère; ses prétentions sont fondées sur le consentement d'un monarque imbécile et sur la lâcheté de quelques nobles pusillanimes, au mépris des droits de plusieurs millions d'hommes, armés pour s'opposer à lui. Voilà ce qu'il y a d'impie dans son entreprise, ce qui rend son gouvernement odieux, ce qui pousse tout noble cœur à repousser la souillure de

actions d'éclat signaleront peut-être cette guerre, mais elle est en elle-même blâmable. Le sort des hommes d'État, aux Indes, n'est pas plus honorable que celui des guerriers. Nous en avons vu de remarquables par leurs vertus et leurs talents, lutter contre leur déplorable mission. Plus ils étaient éminents, plus ils avaient la conviction de l'inanité de leurs efforts, plus ils sentaient qu'ils ne pouvaient que pallier le mal, sans pouvoir aborder la noble tâche de contribuer d'une manière durable au bien-être et au bonheur de leurs sujets. Il est glorieux pour ces hommes d'avoir accompli leur devoir,

son contact. » — *Napier*, Pen. War, vol. I, page 10. — Nous devons sympathiser avec les Espagnols résistant à Bonaparte,

bien qu'ils ne se fissent point illusion sur le résultat. Mais à l'hommage qu'ils méritent, se mêle comme un sentiment de pitié. L'Inde n'offre donc une gloire légitime, ni à l'homme d'État, ni au guerrier.

Et quant au pays qu'ils servent, l'Angleterre, la seule gloire réelle qu'elle puisse recueillir aux Indes, est celle que lui vaudrait la restitution de sa conquête : il ne tient qu'à elle de l'acquérir. Hélas ! je sens, en écrivant ces lignes, que le moment est passé pour une si noble démarche, et que l'Angleterre est destinée à être honteusement expulsée, ou à recommencer ce qu'elle a fait. Dans ce cas, ce qui lui serait le plus funeste, ce serait de réussir.

Jusqu'ici j'ai développé une politique étrangère aux idées et aux sentiments des classes supérieures de l'Angleterre. Je suis comparativement seul, mais j'ai la ferme conviction que beaucoup d'Anglais peuvent être ébranlés par mes opinions et sympathiser avec moi, au moins intellectuellement, sinon complètement. Je crois que ces opinions seront partagées par la majorité des penseurs européens, qu'elles se trouvent d'accord avec les sentiments généraux de moralité qui sont répandus dans les masses, et qu'elles sont conformes aux conclusions du chef-d'œuvre de la philosophie politique. Je n'espère pas cependant de voir les principes que je viens d'exposer, être adoptés de sitôt par mon pays ou par mon siècle; mais j'ai l'intime confiance qu'elles prévaudront dans l'avenir.

C'est pourquoi, dans les pages suivantes, je m'adresse à deux classes, parmi lesquelles j'ai l'espérance de les voir plutôt pénétrer : ce sont les femmes et les prolétaires anglais. S'ils me font défaut, mes convictions n'en seront pas ébranlées, car ce sont bien elles qui m'ont donné le courage, comme serviteur avoué de l'humanité, d'élever la voix contre l'occupation prolongée de l'Inde par l'Angleterre. Je me suis élevé en faveur d'un grand peuple, jusqu'alors injustement opprimé, et qui combat aujourd'hui pour son affranchissement ; en cela, j'ai ouvertement défendu ce que je considère comme la raison et la justice, contre l'erreur et l'égoïsme.



7

SECONDE PARTIE



SECONDE PARTIE



PREMIÈRE SECTION

On admet assez généralement que les femmes n'ont point à s'occuper de politique ; et cette opinion est juste à un certain degré. Car, si l'on entend par politique, les détails du gouverne-

ment, la lutte des partis, et les questions plus ou moins ignobles d'ambition personnelle, certes les femmes ne sauraient trop s'abstenir. Mais il est un aspect, en politique, qui ne doit pas les éloigner. Elles sont parfaitement compétentes dans les questions générales et leur jugement peut y être des plus précieux. A mesure que la politique, prenant sa véritable place, et se subordonnant de plus en plus à la morale, laissera les hautes considérations de celle-ci prévaloir sur les siennes propres, l'intervention féminine acquerra plus de valeur, et l'on reconnaîtra qu'elle est de plus en plus désirable et nécessaire. C'est aux femmes à juger de la portée de leur influence, et des moyens les plus convenables pour la répandre parmi ceux avec qui elles sont en contact. Dans toutes les

relations de la vie, elles ont, comme mères, comme épouses, comme sœurs et comme filles, de fréquentes occasions d'exercer une action modératrice sur les jugements plus égoïstes et plus froids de leurs fils, de leurs époux, de leurs frères et de leurs pères. Il est bien temps que ce pouvoir modérateur surgisse.

C'est pourquoi je dis aux femmes d'Angleterre : Cette question est une de celles où vous devez faire entendre votre voix. Écartez les sophismes de l'intérêt et de la passion, et faites appel à de plus nobles sentiments. Vous écoutez avec horreur le récit des outrages. Vous consentiriez, quoiqu'en fermant les yeux, à ce qu'on infligeât un juste châtiment. Mais vous ne sauriez vous associer au cri de vengeance ! Vous

devez le réprouver énergiquement. Vous devez vous détourner avec dégoût de ceux qui font appel aux sentiments de haine, et combattre les efforts qu'ils tentent pour persuader à l'Angleterre qu'elle ne peut réparer les outrages qu'elle a reçus, qu'en violant elle-même les plus saintes lois de l'humanité.

Quant à l'Inde, sans aborder la question d'intérêt, vous devez apprécier ce que la justice réclame. Ne vous occupez nullement du point de vue statistique, administratif et commercial. Portez le débat au tribunal de votre conscience, et maintenez-le en face de vos principes de moralité. N'écoutez pas ceux qui nient votre compétence dans ces justes limites. Les questions de morale vous appartiennent plus qu'à nous

encore, en vertu de votre supériorité affective. Demandez, et ne vous contentez pas de réponses évasives; demandez à quel titre l'Angleterre possède l'Inde? Est-ce la force ou le droit qui la lui a donnée? Est-il de notre devoir de la garder? Est-ce d'après le consentement de son peuple que nous persistons à vouloir la gouverner, ou seulement en vertu du jugement que nous portons nous-mêmes sur nos propres prétentions? Plus sensibles que nous aux souffrances morales, et admettant moins que nous la compensation que peuvent offrir les avantages matériels, vous pouvez mieux juger de la répugnance des populations indiennes pour la domination étrangère, bien qu'elle ait pu leur être avantageuse sous quelques rapports. Plus sympathiques que nous, vous apprécierez davan-

tage la vie domestique de l'Hindou ; et ses instincts religieux les plus obscurs n'exciteront pas votre dédain. Vous pourrez être touchées par la beauté d'une idée, bien qu'elle soit cachée sous une forme barbare. Jusque dans la *Suttée*, vous saurez reconnaître, bien que perverti dans son mode d'expression, l'admirable sentiment qui veut faire triompher l'union conjugale de la mort elle-même.

Si l'on allègue devant vous l'intérêt de la civilisation, appréciez à sa juste valeur notre état social, matériel et mécanique, négligeant tout élément spirituel et moral. Et quand vous l'aurez estimé ce qu'il vaut, vous comprendrez aisément ce qui m'empêche de désirer son extension. Vous saurez apprécier aussi, en songeant

aux liens si chers de la famille, combien il était indispensable d'agir avec douceur, en traitant ces rapports chez les autres. Vous ne pourrez alors, vous empêcher de blâmer l'importation violente de nos mœurs occidentales dans l'Inde.

Si l'on vous objecte l'intérêt du christianisme, je ne vous demande point d'abandonner vos convictions ni d'adopter les miennes. Au contraire, je vous adjure d'évoquer en vous le plus pur idéal de la foi que vous chérissez, et dans laquelle vous vivez. Donnez-lui toute sa plénitude, toute sa vigueur, et à ce suprême degré d'exaltation, placez en regard la domination anglaise dans l'Inde, son origine, son histoire, ses effets dans le passé et pour le présent, ses conséquences probables envers l'avenir. De-

mandez-vous alors s'il est de l'intérêt de cette foi de s'offrir à ces peuples avec un semblable cortège, et s'il ne vaudrait pas mieux qu'elle vint, comme autrefois, sans appui temporel et dégagée de toute convoitise matérielle ? Je ne crains point votre réponse.

Enfin, si le christianisme, qui sert d'excuse à notre domination, avait perdu son empire sur vous, ne restez pas sans foi religieuse. Reconnaissez-en la nécessité, et sachez apprécier les titres d'une doctrine qui apporte une entière satisfaction aux meilleurs sentiments de la femme ; qui, sans rien exagérer, l'élève au premier rang, d'après sa nature et son influence morale ; qui, s'élevant au-dessus des maux et du désordre produits par la longue dissolution

de l'ordre ancien, rappelle nos souvenirs vers le pur et gracieux idéal de nos ancêtres chevaleresques ; qui peut assouvir votre amour du beau par une éminente culture esthétique ; qui saura répondre aux besoins de votre intelligence par une éducation aussi complète, quoique moins approfondie, que celle du plus puissant philosophie ; qui satisfera tous vos sentiments moraux de justice et d'ordre social ; qui cultivera et développera vos aspirations religieuses, et vous offrira des moyens d'expression bien plus étendus que le plus fastueux rituel du catholicisme.

DEUXIÈME SECTION

Ce second appel s'adresse aux prolétaires anglais. Leur compétence politique est plus généralement admise que celle des femmes, quoiqu'il soit assez difficile de fixer les limites dans lesquelles leur influence doit s'exercer. Sans avoir

la prétention de déterminer ces bornes, il me semble cependant que, dans un ordre politique bien établi, ils doivent, sans s'immiscer dans les détails, exercer leur jugement sur les principes généraux du gouvernement, sur son esprit et ses tendances. Aussi, cette question de l'Inde, qui entraîne la modification de toute la conduite politique de l'Angleterre, est-elle spécialement de leur ressort, et il serait essentiel que leur influence s'y fît sentir. Personne n'y est plus intéressé qu'eux-mêmes ; personne ne peut mieux envisager la question sous tous ses aspects, soit sous le rapport des conditions politiques, soit dans l'intérêt de l'Inde ou de l'Angleterre. Enfin, nul, j'ose le dire, n'est plus capable de sentir et d'apprécier les considérations morales. C'est la seule classe de mes con-

citoyens à laquelle je puisse en appeler avec espoir d'un succès immédiat. Je ne sais s'ils me comprendront, mais ils constituent mon appui normal. Celui qui, en dehors de toute tendance révolutionnaire, vient réclamer la réorganisation de la société, doit naturellement jeter ses regards et fonder son espérance sur ceux qui, courbés sous le poids des imperfections actuelles, aspirent naturellement à les voir corriger. Et même plus tard, quand la transition actuelle sera accomplie, et que l'humanité sera entrée dans sa voie définitive, c'est encore entre les philosophes et les prolétaires que devra exister la plus intime alliance politique et la plus parfaite sympathie morale, pour assurer la régularité des fonctions sociales. Tels sont les motifs

qui m'engagent à faire cet appel aux travailleurs anglais.

Prolétaires, le problème est double. C'est la question indienne qui est posée, mais c'est aussi la question anglaise. Les intérêts des deux pays sont les mêmes : nous les considérerons successivement si vous le voulez, mais nous ne pouvons les séparer. L'Inde d'abord, puis l'Angleterre. Vous demandez, sans obtenir de réponse, quels sont nos droits sur ce pays, comment il peut dépendre de nous? Nous pouvons y commercer et même y prêcher, si notre foi nous y pousse, mais pourquoi le conquérir et le gouverner? Vous, qui n'êtes pas éblouis par ce qui aveugle tant d'autres, vous qui n'avez aux Indes ni intérêts, ni relations, qui ne tirez aucun

avantage de sa possession, vous pouvez à juste titre apporter dans cette question le strict jugement moral de l'homme désintéressé. Et votre sentence ne saurait approuver notre maintien à main armée. En faisant justice des arguments dont on se sert, vous refuserez de croire que la masse de la nation hindoue puisse désirer notre domination (1). Vous comparerez cette asser-

(1) Je cite encore lord Shaftesbury ; il demande : Si l'on a trouvé dans un cas quelconque le moindre vestige d'un soulèvement national ? Tout le pays, dit-il, a été, à peu d'exceptions près, parfaitement tranquille. La plupart des villages ont assisté les troupes royales et combattu les insurgés. Toutes les fois que le fait contraire s'est produit, on peut l'attribuer à ces hordes sauvages et à ces brigands sans lois qu'on trouvera toujours, dans le

tion avec celles que vous entendez émettre chaque jour sur l'état de vos propres sentiments. Nul ne sait mieux que vous la différence qui existe entre l'approbation et la soumission; et s'il est vrai que les hommes peuvent supporter de grandes souffrances, afin d'en éviter de plus grandes encore, cette résignation ne prouve

continent indien, errants de village en village. Mais ces villages eux-mêmes, dans aucune occasion, ne se sont insurgés contre le pouvoir britannique; au contraire, ils ont reconnu que leur sécurité consistait dans la permanente et vigoureuse domination de Sa Majesté. — Si l'assertion du noble lord est véridique, que signifie la proposition du *Times*, que je reçois par le même journal (le *Spectateur* du 7 novembre): « Que les districts rebelles payent au moins les frais de leur pacification. » -

nullement qu'ils ne perçoivent pas la douleur. Vous savez jusqu'à quel point vos sentiments sont mal interprétés et vos intérêts mis en oubli par ceux qui vous gouvernent ; eh bien, est-il probable qu'ils s'efforcent de mieux comprendre les besoins des populations de l'Inde, si éloignées, et si étrangères à notre civilisation ? Vous avez demandé satisfaction pour vous-mêmes ; vous sympathisez avec les Hongrois et les Italiens qui réclament pour eux aussi indépendance et justice ; il ne vous faut qu'étendre ces sentiments aux pauvres Hindous qui luttent pour le même objet. Vous pouvez désirer que justice soit faite d'une soldatesque en révolte ; mais vous ne pouvez consentir à ce qu'on immole indistinctement l'innocent et le coupable, pour satisfaire à l'orgueil et à la vengeance de

l'Angleterre. Appelez donc la justice, mais aussi la miséricorde! qui mieux que vous pourrait apprécier combien la provocation a été grande? si elle ne peut excuser les crimes commis, elle explique du moins cet état d'indignation qui s'est traduit par des outrages chez ces natures ardentes. Pour savoir quelle a été la conduite des Anglais aux Indes, jetez les yeux sur votre aristocratie territoriale ou industrielle, sur vos classes moyennes; considérez la dure indifférence des uns, la hautaine négligence des autres; voyez-les poursuivre la satisfaction effrénée de leurs goûts et de leurs penchants, étaler cette richesse et ce luxe fastueux qui contrastent si cruellement avec votre dénûment et vos souffrances. Cependant, ce sont des compatriotes qui agissent ainsi; ils ne sont pas sans avoir

avec vous quelques sentiments communs, quelques points de contact sympathiques. Supposez un instant qu'ils soient d'une autre race, qu'ils aient un autre langage, une religion différente; ajoutez à leur arrogance l'orgueil des conquérants, et vous aurez la mesure de ce qu'ont dû souffrir les Indiens, Mahométans ou Hindous; et vous pourrez comprendre, quelle ardeur de vengeance a dû les animer, et à quels excès elle a pu les pousser.

Après avoir considéré à ce point de vue la révolte actuelle, vous n'éprouverez aucune difficulté à juger la question sous un aspect plus général. Vous qui connaissez l'oppression, vous sentirez combien la négligence et l'injustice peuvent envenimer la haine qu'elle excite. Vous

sympathiserez avec les Hindous : vous comprendrez que si l'impôt pèse lourdement sur la population, alors même qu'il est destiné à soutenir un gouvernement national, il devient bien plus lourd encore, lorsque le tribut payé avec tant de répugnance se trouve mal employé, dissipé, et ne sert en définitive qu'à solder les dividendes d'une compagnie de marchands oppresseurs. Au onzième siècle, l'Angleterre fut conquise par les Normands ; aucune différence de race, ni de religion ne séparait les deux populations ; et cependant, la lente progression des siècles et l'intime mélange des deux races n'a pu effacer qu'imparfaitement les maux de la conquête. La difficulté aurait été bien plus grande si aucune fusion n'eût été possible, et que la conquête normande se fût bornée à une

occupation permanente, sans aucun mélange avec le peuple vaincu. Toutes ces raisons font que j'en appelle à vous sans crainte, certain que votre jugement sera conforme au simple bon sens anglais, et aux sentiments d'humanité. De même que vous vous soulèveriez comme un seul homme pour repousser l'invasion étrangère, de même, vous devez n'avoir qu'une seule voix pour empêcher votre pays d'être oppresseur envers d'autres nations.

Maintenant, si, revenant à l'Angleterre, nous nous demandons comment cette question indienne peut influer sur le bien-être de la majorité de la nation, je vous rappellerai que vous devez prévoir, d'après l'expérience du passé, que ce n'est point celui sur qui portera le far-

deau qui recueillera le prix de la journée. On parle beaucoup de progrès dans le bien-être des masses ; mais vous savez ce que vaut, en réalité, un pareil langage. A mesure que la grandeur et la puissance de l'Angleterre se sont accrues, à mesure que votre nombre, vos travaux ont augmenté, vous avez vu décroître votre influence et votre action politiques, en même temps que vos souffrances physiques et morales s'étendaient chaque jour. Vous êtes la seule classe qui puisse assez éprouver le sentiment de l'urgente nécessité d'une réorganisation sociale, et vous voyez de plus en plus que la politique du gouvernement, loin de prendre vos besoins en considération, consiste à ajourner indéfiniment toute amélioration, en s'effor-

çant de détourner au dehors l'énergie populaire.

Considérez la conduite présente et passée de vos gouvernants, leur accord dans la crise actuelle, et le zèle avec lequel ils cherchent à vous endoctriner sur cette question de l'Inde. Leur instinct ne les trompe pas : elle est effectivement la clef de voûte du système politique existant. Ils le savent bien, et vous ne pouvez mieux les attaquer que sur ce point, où ils sont aussi incompétents qu'en ce qui concerne la grande question intérieure, consistant à vous incorporer dans l'ordre social en satisfaisant à vos exigences légitimes, et tout en s'assurant de votre concours.

Posez résolument votre *reto* à ces hommes incapables, et empêchez-les d'aller plus avant. Encore plus de pouvoir et de domination, encore plus de commerce et d'action extérieure, voilà leur cri ; que le vôtre soit : un meilleur emploi du pouvoir, une domination moins dispersée, mais mieux exercée, un commerce moins étendu, mais plus moral ; un peu moins d'action extérieure et plus d'attention à ce qui se passe chez nous. Je ne veux pas me servir du langage révolutionnaire : je l'employai jadis, mais il n'est plus le mien depuis que je défends l'ordre comme étant la base du progrès ; mes idées n'ont donc rien de subversif. C'est dans l'intérêt de cet ordre qu'ils font profession de respecter tout comme moi, et que cependant ils compromettent chaque jour par leur conduite,

que je dois parler librement de notre classe gouvernante. Les vérités que j'ai à dire ne sont pas seulement critiques, on doit les regarder comme des avertissements consciencieux. Je considère les classes dirigeantes comme complètement démoralisées par une fausse politique, et perverties par un trop long abus du pouvoir. Vous devez les rappeler à un meilleur esprit, et exercer envers eux votre influence morale. Il est temps de montrer combien votre jugement diffère du leur, et vous devez leur imposer un changement complet de politique. Qu'ils concentrent sur la question sociale l'énergie qu'ils dissipent en déshonorantes querelles avec la Chine, ou en mauvaise administration aux Indes. La manifestation opportune de votre opinion, et l'énergique emploi de votre influence

pourront peut-être dissiper l'orage qui nous menace, et en assurant un progrès suffisant à l'intérieur, éviter ces violentes interruptions de l'ordre, si funestes à tous.

Passons à d'autres considérations également importantes. Votre gouvernement se propose de maintenir désormais les Indiens dans la soumission, au moyen de troupes européennes. On assure que soixante-dix mille hommes suffiront pour obtenir ce résultat. Je crois que ce chiffre est trop faible; mais en l'acceptant comme suffisant, comment se le procurer? Nos hommes d'Etat sentent bien cette difficulté, et pour la résoudre, ils essayent de nous accoutumer graduellement à l'idée de devenir une nation militaire. Rien ne peut donner une plus

triste opinion de leur capacité ; et votre rigoureux bon sens rejettera ce projet insensé. Instruits par l'expérience, vous repoussez la guerre, et vous commencez à sentir, comme toutes les autres nations de l'Europe, que la paix est la première condition de tout espoir rationnel d'amélioration sociale. Dans notre siècle industriel, un gouvernement qui cherche à développer les tendances militaires devient une anomalie dégradante.

Mais admettons que soixante-dix mille hommes suffisent pour réduire l'Inde ? À quel titre irons-nous sacrifier un si grand nombre d'hommes, exposer tant d'existences précieuses au meurtrier climat d'Orient et à toutes les chances désastreuses d'une insurrection permanente ?

Quoi ! les soldats anglais rempliraient aux Indes le rôle des soldats autrichiens en Italie ; ils deviendraient les ministres détestés de la tyrannie étrangère ! Qu'est-ce qu'un peu plus de bien-être, qu'une solde plus élevée dans de semblables conditions ? D'aussi viles considérations ne peuvent avoir de poids qu'auprès d'une soldatesque démoralisée, et il n'en saurait être ainsi, puisque l'armée se recrute dans vos rangs. Votre coalition, si puissante dans d'autres cas, doit se manifester ici par une solennelle, mais paisible désapprobation, envers tous ceux qui contracteraient cet engagement militaire. Vous pouvez ainsi arrêter le recrutement.

Et qui payera cet armement ? Ce ne sera pas l'Inde assurément : ses finances sont actuelle-

ment insuffisantes, et dans l'avenir, on ne peut supposer qu'elles deviennent assez considérables pour subvenir à une telle charge, si nous nous arrogions le droit de faire payer aux vaincus leur défaite. Ce sera sur vous encore que retombera cet énorme fardeau, et il vous faudra dépasser cette faible barrière qui sépare l'aisance de la misère, et qui représente tout ce que vous pouvez espérer de meilleur. Vous convient-il d'être ainsi exploités?

Il faut donc faire connaître vos sentiments par tous les moyens légitimes. Il faut qu'on sache que vous souhaitez de voir l'Angleterre renoncer à sa politique d'oppression et de fanfaronade, pour adopter des principes de paix et de respect envers le droit d'autrui. Qu'il soit bien entendu surtout, que l'activité que l'on a

jusqu'ici gaspillée à l'extérieur, doit désormais être consacrée à la solution des questions sociales intérieures.

Après avoir fait appel à votre moralité et à vos intérêts les plus chers, je vous conjure, pour l'honneur de votre pays (qui est ici fortement engagé), et au nom de l'humanité, d'écouter ma voix. Aucun préjugé ne vous arrête : vous connaissez l'inanité de notre civilisation, l'insuffisance de notre religion. Beaucoup d'entre vous cherchent vainement, autour d'eux, une doctrine qui soit digne de ce nom. A vous, comme aux femmes, revient le pouvoir modérateur. C'est par votre union spirituelle avec les philosophes sociaux, qu'un tel pouvoir peut être dignement exercé. Cette alliance doit de-

venir chaque jour plus intime et plus active. La philosophie a fait sa part, je vous adjure de vous mettre à l'œuvre pour faire la vôtre.

Cette union spirituelle renferme de grandes choses : elle nécessite de votre part l'acceptation de l'ordre existant, à condition toutefois qu'il puisse servir de base au progrès. N'écoutez donc aucun appel révolutionnaire, n'acceptez aucune doctrine anarchique, si en faveur qu'elle puisse être. Ne vous laissez pas prendre aux amorces que l'on vous tend, faites peu de cas de l'extension du suffrage et des distinctions académiques, refusez toute part dans l'absurde système d'éducation en faveur aujourd'hui. Acceptez dignement votre situation, mais ne négligez rien pour l'améliorer.

L'union des prolétaires et des philosophes peut assurer deux choses : une éducation répondant à tous vos besoins, la même pour tous deux, sauf le degré qu'exigent leurs besoins respectifs. Elle peut aussi instituer un contrôle moral envers les riches, à qui revient naturellement le gouvernement temporel de la société. Une telle organisation favorisera la concentration des capitaux, réprimera toute tendance oppressive comme tout abus de pouvoir, par le blâme social ; mais elle saura aussi donner de nobles encouragements aux patriciens qui feront un digne emploi public de leur puissance. Si vous comprenez bien la portée de ce moyen d'action, il vous sera possible d'en assurer graduellement l'exercice. Je suis prêt à vous donner à cet égard tous les éclaircissements nécessaires,

comme à vous renseigner toujours, rempli que je suis envers vous d'une sympathie que je voudrais vous inspirer pour moi-même.

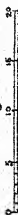
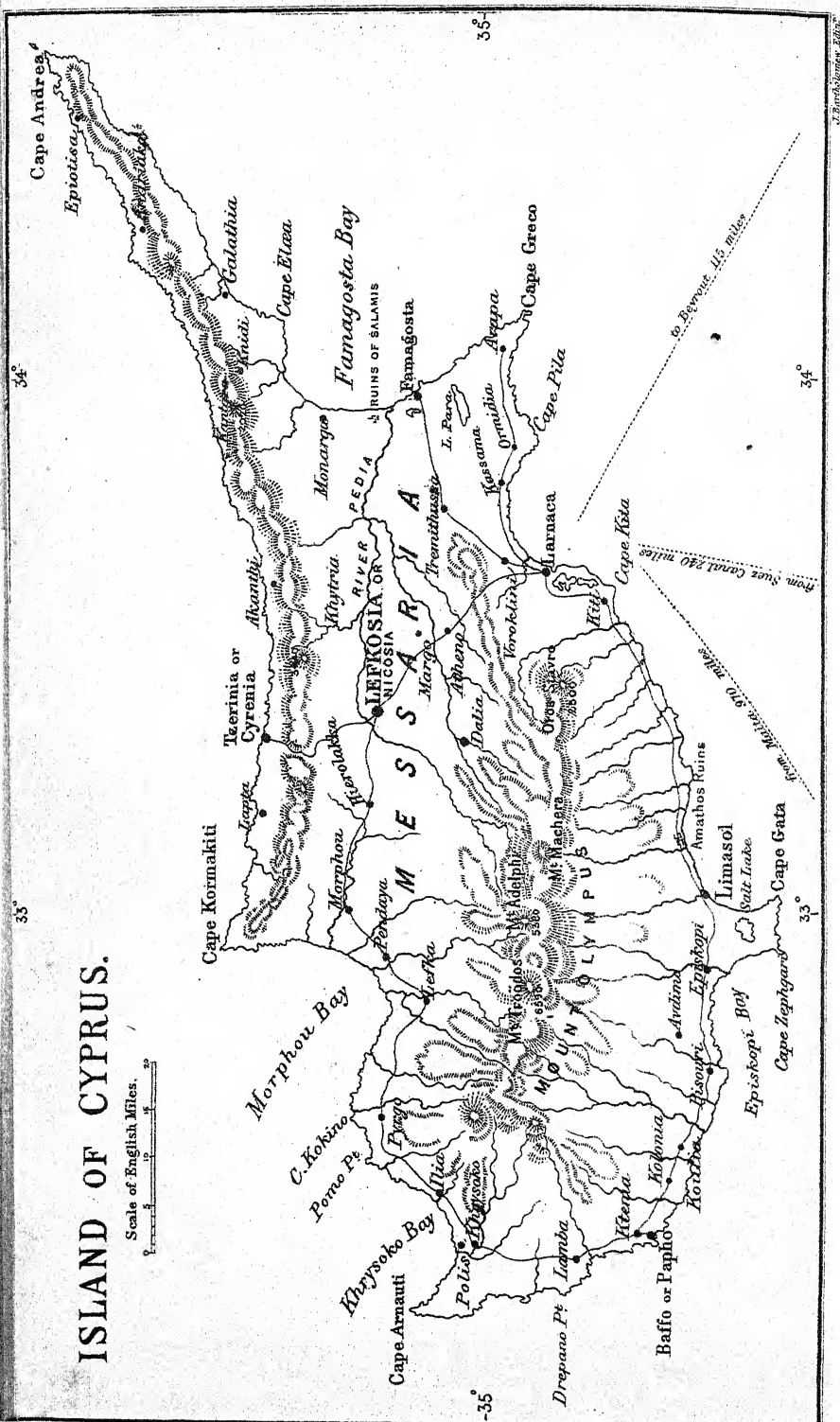
Je termine en vous rappelant que votre première demande doit être que l'Angleterre change de politique envers toutes les nations, ses égales ou ses inférieures, et qu'elle offre comme preuve de son entrée dans cette voie, l'abandon de l'Inde.

FIN.

8

ISLAND OF CYPRUS.

Scale of English Miles.

CYPRUS:
ITS
VALUE AND IMPORTANCE
TO
ENGLAND.

WITH MAP.



LONDON:
DIPROSE AND BATEMAN, SHEFFIELD STREET,

MANCHESTER:
ABEL HEYWOOD & SON, OLDHAM STREET.

LONDON:

DIPROSE, BATEMAN & CO., PRINTERS, SHEFFIELD STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

CYPRUS:

ITS

VALUE AND IMPORTANCE TO ENGLAND.

VALUE OF CYPRUS TO ENGLAND.

"But it is not upon our fleets and our armies, however great they may be, that we mainly depend, but on that enterprise on which this country is about to enter. What I most highly value is the consciousness that the Eastern nations will repose confidence in this country, and that they well know that, while we can endorse our policy at the same time, our Empire is one of liberty, truth, and justice."

(Extract from Lord Beaconsfield's Speech in the House of Lords, July 18th, 1878.)

It is no easy matter to appraise properly the rate of worth that should be set on Cyprus as an addition to the British Empire; for that it should be regarded as a permanent acquisition few will doubt, when the condition of its remaining under our administration is to be regulated by the tenure of Kars, Ardahan and Batoum, or any one of them, by Russia. Writers in newspapers have for some time past been pointing out with great ability the numerous advantages we shall gain strategically and commercially, as well as from a

political, a moral and a naval point of view. After briefly glancing at what has been said in this direction, we shall then dwell upon the vast import that should be attached to our possession of Cyprus.

Any one skilled in the art of war will at once see how great is the value of this island either for arranging an army for conflict, or for landing it to resist the advance of an enemy on the Asiatic Continent. Cyprus is about an equal distance of sixty miles from the coast of Asia Minor on the north, or the Syrian coast on the east ; and forces could be taken from the island to the mainland, and landed easily from sunrise till sunset, ay, less than nine hours.

As a commercial people we cannot rate the acquisition of Cyprus at too high a value. It holds the key of the Egyptian valley through which a railway to expedite our passage to India will be laid down sooner or later. It also holds the key of the Gulf of Scanderoon, which we may look forward to as becoming in a few years a grand and flourishing emporium of the commerce of the Levant. Then Cyprus opens the way for British energy and enterprise to develope its many resources, and work its mines of gold and silver and its caves of jasper and agate.

Politically Cyprus is a great gain for us. With Constantinople now easily accessible to us, we shall be able to take the place of Russia, and possess over the Councils of the Porte a preponderating authority. It will thus be in our power to see those reforms carried out in Asiatic Turkey, which it is desirable should be

accomplished if we are to undertake the guardianship of the Ottoman Empire in that part of its possessions.

We may be certain that our ownership of Cyprus will considerably increase our moral influence among all the nations of the East, and more especially the people of India. Our protection of the Mahometan power of Turkey cannot fail to conciliate and endear us to the Mussulman population of Hindostan.

The impetus that Cyprus will give to our naval strength must be obvious at a glance. We have now a firm hold over the whole of the Mediterranean, possessing, as we do, at the extreme west, such a stronghold as Gibraltar, in the centre the impregnable fortress of Malta, and now at the extreme east a large and important island.

The good that we have done to Cyprus itself is incalculable. There was a time when it saw good days; it is said when it was under the Venetians to have been peopled by a million of happy and prosperous souls. Under the ægis of England those days will come again; once more Cyprus will boast of abundance, healthiness, and happy homes, and the inhabitants will recognize what they have been strangers to for hundreds of years, the wholesomeness of industry, and the sanctity of State promises.

But there is something behind all this which causes our possession of Cyprus to challenge our highest admiration, it being a stronghold in a sea, the Mediterranean, and in a gulf, that of Scanderoon, which have real commercial importance. It forms one more of the fortresses,

islands and peninsulas that strongly guard our highway along the Mediterranean and the Red and Arabian Seas to our Indian Empire.

Our commerce and communication would not be safe if we had not the point where there is a narrow strait, 15 miles across, in entering the Mediterranean. It is the fortress of Gibraltar. Midway in that important inland sea, the passage again narrows to about 100 miles, between Sicily and Africa. We have the command of that passage by possessing the only island situated in it—Malta. We find at the mouth of the Red Sea a narrow strait 17 miles wide, the Strait of Babelmandeb. In it is an island, or rather a bare, black, sterile, and precipitous rock, the very counterpart of Gibraltar, named Perim, commanding on either side the ship-channels that connect the Red Sea with the Sea of Babelmandeb. We have owned the island of Perim since 1857. In our passage to India there was another place we very much wanted, and we made the valuable acquisition eighteen years before we got Perim, that was the Peninsula of Aden, with its populous town, its safe harbour, its convenient depôt for coaling, and its precipitous, sterile rock like another Gibraltar. When we obtained it in 1839, we made the first valuable acquisition in the present reign. Opposite Cape Gardafui, in Africa, there is a group of islands, the two principal of which are Socotra and Kouri, in the Arabian Sea. "At present," says M'Culloch's "Geographical Dictionary" (edited by Mr. Frederick Martin in 1866,) "Socotra belongs to the Sultan of Kisseen, but his supremacy is little more than

nominal ; the government being chiefly delegated to one of the principal inhabitants, who again exercises little authority, except over the Bedouin or native population." There Mr. Martin stops, but he might have added that Socotra and Kourî have virtually belonged to England for more than a dozen years. England exercises all the authority there, for she has purchased the island group, and if the purchase money may not have been considered sufficiently large for nominal possession, England has at any rate paid the retaining fee, and no rival power can ever possess Socotra and its dependencies. After passing the Socotra group, a ship has safe enough sailing till she gets to India, for she is then well out in the open ocean, and the poet says of England that—

" Her march is on the mountain wave,
Her home is on the deep."

But since previous British statesmen have safely secured on a permanent basis our mercantile interests in a safe transit to India, the Suez Canal has been made, and by becoming the owner of nearly one-half of the shares, England is most interested in the uninterrupted navigation of that famous water-way. Of a hundred vessels that pass through, seventy-five are British. It is, therefore, necessary that we should have some surer guarantee than we now have for our vessels not being hindered in the progress of their voyage. It strikes us that that guarantee we have effectually secured by the holding of Cyprus,—for if it is equi-distant, eight hours sail from Carmania on the one hand, and Syria on the other,—it is but fifteen hours steaming to the mouth of the Suez Canal.

Our evenness of communication with India which existed before it was disturbed by the Suez Canal is now restored by our occupation of Cyprus.

No one knows better than Lord Beaconsfield that a well-chosen colony is a better right arm of naval warfare than mail-clad steamers. Cyprus has this advantage of situation besides other advantages that are looked for as among the inexorable demands of modern warfare,—ports easy of access ; ports, too, that will be made depôts for coaling ; where there will be docks and factories for the making of machinery ; and over and above all this Cyprus has a natural strength which will be artificially increased, and it has the further and enormous benefit of being at an easy distance from Malta and the mouth of the Suez Canal, which are two of the most important links in the chain of our commercial communication with our great Eastern dependency, our Australian colonies, and our relationships in the Chinese Seas and the Pacific Ocean.

THE COMMERCIAL VALUE OF CYPRUS.

“ The movement in taking Cyprus is not European ; it is English. We have taken the step there that we think necessary for the maintenance of our Empire, and for its preservation in peace.”

(Extract from Lord Beaconsfield's Speech in the House of Lords, July 18th, 1878.)

There can be no doubt that for many years to come, the interest on the capital we shall have to sink in the development of the resources of Cyprus must far exceed any return we can hope to obtain ; but at the same time there is little doubt that it will become a place of

considerable commercial importance. England will supply Cyprus with every description of goods, and merchants may rely upon getting good returns for their capital if they select suitable articles,—hardware, provisions, spirits, oilmen's stores, drapery, drugs, agricultural implements, household furniture, petroleum, glass, and other such goods, are certain to be in great demand. Aromatic tobacco of the most delicate quality is extensively grown, principally for the St. Petersburg market. The vines are richer than in any other country, and when properly cultivated, will supply us with the wine Homer praised so much. The mines are rich in copper, and a proof of gold existing is that large pieces of the precious metal are daily washed down by the mountain streams; capitalists will find the mines, once worked by the Greeks and others but now abandoned, a source of unlimited wealth. Coal is also found, but, through lack of enterprise, the mines have never been touched; mineral and lake salt is abundant, and ozokerit exists not far from Lefkosia, also at Citti. Nearly the entire imports consist of British goods brought from Beyrout, Constantinople, Smyrna, and the Mediterranean ports. From Limasol there is a considerable trade in the shipment of wines* and raki, made in the vicinity, to Egypt and the islands of the Archipelago; large quantities of carobs, which grow in the neighbouring forests, are shipped to Russia and Italy. Marina is the chief depôt

* There is an average yield of 1,246,000 gallons of wine and 198,000 cwt. of salt, forming four-fifths of the entire exportation, principally to Marseilles, Leghorn, Trieste, and the Coast of Syria.

of the commerce of the island. In 1858, Chambers tells us that the imports amounted to £57,939, and the exports to £131,110. The revenue amounted to £116,666, total cost of government only £8,333, being a clear annual gain to the Sultan of £108,000.

From the speech made by Lord Lilford in the House of Lords, July 19, 1878, it appears from the results of his observation of the island in 1875, that, looking at it in a commercial point of view, the main objection to it was the want of harbours, whilst the anchorages were subject to the south-west winds. He could offer no opinion on the nature of the climate, but there was no scarcity of water, though a great lack of means of utilising it. Nothing was wanted, in short, but money and enterprise, and on the whole he believed that the acquisition of the island would be generally advantageous to this country.

THE MILITARY VALUE OF CYPRUS.

In the first place, the presence of a British force in the island will serve a most important purpose by helping to protect the Suez Canal. If the Russians were allowed to establish themselves at Erzeroum or thereabouts, there would be little to prevent their marching on Egypt. Such an advance would be scarcely undertaken even by a Gourko or a Skobeleff in the face of an English *corps d'armée* at Cyprus, ready at any moment to strike the flank of the advancing column. It therefore seems that our military position in connection with this most important highway to India will be greatly

strengthened. It is not only, however, the established road of England to the East that derives advantage from the acquisition of Cyprus. We also directly gain one end of the Euphrates Valley route, and thus obtain command over what may hereafter become a rival to the Suez Canal for military purposes. Whether it will be found feasible to construct the long talked of railway between the head of the Persian Gulf and the Levant remains to be seen. The natural difficulties are not great, but it is estimated that from eight to ten millions sterling would be required for the construction of the line. With an Indian force established somewhere in the neighbourhood of, say Fao, the contingent at Cyprus might be reinforced simultaneously from both sides as soon as the projected railway through the Euphrates Valley is completed. In the meantime there would be the great strategical gain resulting from having a second base of operations should the Russians ever attempt to reach Constantinople through Asia Minor. The contingents from Cyprus and the Persian Gulf post might move simultaneously in such a case on some central point—Diarbeka for instance—thus rendering it imperatively necessary for the invader to march to the southward in order to clear his flank. Another advantage of the supplementary outpost on the Indian side would be its securing the other end of the only possible alternative route to Hindostan besides the Egyptian. It has also to be remembered that the Euphrates Valley road is considerably shorter than the Red Sea line, a matter of some importance if the garrison of Cyprus is to be

permanently supplied with native troops. Were the Persian and Scanderoon Gulfs connected by a railway, the splendid soldiers of which the Punjaub is so prolific might be conveyed to Kurrachee down the Indus Valley line, thence by steamer to Foa, and across Mesopotamia by rail, in a shorter time than they would take to accomplish the *detour* *via* the Red Sea and Egypt.*

THE NAVAL VALUE OF CYPRUS.

"England must have seen with pride the Mediterranean covered with her ships. She must have seen with pride the discipline and the devotion to her Majesty and her Majesty's Government of all her troops drawn from every part of her Empire."

(Extract from Lord Beaconsfield's Speech in the House of Lords, July 18th, 1873.)

To this country the possession of Cyprus will be of much maritime importance. It might have seemed that Mitylene would have been a better naval station, because it is within easy sail of the Dardanelles; but, in truth, it would always be easy for the greatest of maritime Powers to close that narrow passage without permanently lying in wait at the entrance. If Constantinople is in some ways an incomparable port, it has the disadvantage of being more easily sealed up than many naval stations even of the fifth and sixth magnitude. Cyprus, on the other hand, is much better adapted for protecting the most important link in the chain of our com-

* The sum which will be set down in the annual estimates as the cost of the military establishment at Cyprus, should the present contemplated force of 10,000 men be kept up, will be £1,000,000 sterling per annum. To this will have to be added any excess of the expenses of the civil administration over and above the local receipts.

munications with the sea, since it is the nearest island to the Suez Canal. Short of a position in Egypt close to the canal itself, Cyprus is the best place that this country could have occupied. But for many reasons the taking of Egyptian territory was impracticable, and the possession of the island is attended with certain special advantages. It will enable our ships to be always in the neighbourhood of the Canal, and it will put an end to the fear that the passage could be stopped. To construct a line through more than 900 miles of thinly populated and sometimes desert country would certainly be a bold enterprise. But, if the Government should think that such a railway is necessary to insure the safety of our communications with India, the starting point would in any case be commanded by Cyprus. That island will, in fact, be an admirable naval station, whether for the purpose of protecting the Suez Canal, securing a second road to India, or giving this country the requisite authority in its relations with the Porte. Cyprus closes the Gulf of Scanderoon, the point to which Russia would naturally come if she should meet with no resistance, and the port of the same name could at any time be occupied by our ships. Harbours will have to be constructed at some cost, there not being a good general harbour in the whole island. The last Consular Report so aptly describes the present condition of Cyprus that we may quote the words of this authoritative document. "Public works," writes Mr. Ridley, "there are none to record, either begun or ended. The shipping ports continue in the same state of neglect and dilapida-

tion as depicted in my report of 1874." But the constant bustle of English activity at a naval station, together with a railway from any part of the Levant to the Persian Gulf, will considerably improve the present condition of the island. The *Times* says: "That the island will, in fact, be an admirable naval station," and that it is the best place this country could have occupied.

HISTORY OF THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS.

"OTHELLO. What is the matter, think you?

CASSIO. Something from Cyprus, as I may divine:

It is a business of some heat.

FIRST SENATOR. When we consider

The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk."

Cyprus, the Kibris of the Turks, to which, at this moment, Englishmen are looking forward with so much anxiety, as regards any security or benefit it may be to England, is one of the largest islands situated south of Asia Minor in that portion of the Mediterranean called the Levant. According to the ancient Greek historian Eratosthenes, Cyprus was first discovered 1045 B.C. It was then so densely wooded that it hindered tillage; but the mining operations of the Phœnicians thinned the forest. Josephus says that the descendants of Cittim, grandson of Japhet, first colonised Cyprus. Strabo also gives an account of the chief towns in the island, but most of them have long disappeared. Cyprus belonged successively to the Kings of Persia, of Egypt, and to the Romans, under whose domination it was made a place of banishment for the

debauched nobles of the Roman Empire, who, having disgusted the not-too-sensitive susceptibilities of Roman morality, were sent to Paphos to finish their sensual studies. It was taken by the Greeks 477 B.C.; conquered by the Saracens A.D. 648; but conquered by the Greeks in 957. Cyprus was reduced by Richard I. of England, 1191. He gave it to Guy de Lusignan, who became King in 1192, whose descendants sold it to the Venetians in 1489, who retained it about eighty years. Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus since the Lusignan dynasty, was besieged by the Turks under Mustapha in 1571, the siege lasting forty-five days, when it was taken by storm, after being defended by twenty thousand of its inhabitants. It has been under Turkish rule ever since, and is almost without a history. Under good government, with its natural productions, it would be one of the most valuable islands of the Mediterranean. Larnaca, the chief seaport of the island, is situate about a quarter of a mile from the sea. The climate is very similar to that of Crete; the winter is short and cold, the summer long and hot, but not oppressively so, on account of the sweet Mediterranean breezes, which make the evenings particularly cool; and people of regular habits will find it not only free from sickness, but beneficial, if they do not indulge too freely in the beautiful fruit which grows nearly wild in every part of the island. Sun-stroke is not uncommon in the island, and the inhabitants very seldom venture out in midday; journeys are performed mostly in the night. Cyprus is in size nearly a third less than the County of

Yorkshire, 145 miles in length, 55 miles in breadth, its least breadth 27 miles, having an area of 4,500 square miles. The inhabitants may be roughly estimated at about 100,000, of whom 60,000 are Greeks, 25,000 Turks, and the rest Fellahs and Arabs. They are good-natured, honest, quiet, and hospitable ; the principal language is Greek ; Turkish and Italian being spoken by the upper classes only. The buildings are not worth mentioning, and accommodation will no doubt be in demand, but with English builders, and cheap and plentiful materials, villages will soon grow into towns. Citium, now called Larnaca, was the country of the Chittim, so often mentioned by the Hebrew prophets in connection with Tyre. Although Larnaca is situated in what is regarded as the worst part of Cyprus, the country around being arid, this port, it is stated, has been selected solely owing to the safe anchorage of its roads. A range of mountains—Stavio Vuno and Santa Croce (ancient Olympus), the sides of which are very bold and rugged,—runs through the whole length of the island, attaining an elevation of more than 7,000 feet above the sea. There is a submarine cable laid down between Latakia, celebrated for its aromatic tobacco, and the North East extremity of the island.

THE CLIMATE OF CYPRUS.

The climate varies ; in different parts it is very cold, in winter the frozen snow is preserved during the greater part of the year in the northern region by the winds from the Carmanian Mountains ; in the summer

the heat of the sun is very excessive in the plains, but is moderated by the sea breezes. The stagnant water from the marshes in some parts of the island, render it unhealthy.

Excessive heat prevails at Cyprus. The equipment ordered by the War Office has been calculated on English proportions, and will require to be increased. Water is known to be scarce, and yet only four water-carts are available. Tubes for sinking wells are to follow in the "Simoom."

A telegram has been received from Cyprus, stating that "a good depot had been found. Water, fuel, bread and meat were there in good supply. There was no hay. The land transport was cheap, but boat transport dear."

The *Standard* says : The letter which Captain Farrant has addressed to a contemporary upon the subject of the climate of Cyprus cannot but be considered as most satisfactory, and will go far to silence those critics of the policy of the Government who have been writing as if Cyprus were a mere pest-house, a place in comparison to which the Gold Coast is a fine and healthy locality. Captain Farrant states that he has been stationed on the Coast of Syria for six summers and one winter, and that Cyprus was considered as a sort of holiday ground by the naval officers on the station. He himself was nineteen times at Larnaca, three at Famagosta, and twice at Limasol. Several of the officers took trips into the interior, and returned much pleased and in good health. Upon no one of the nineteen

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occasions when Captain Farrant visited Larnaca was the sea very boisterous, or indeed so rough as to prevent a landing being effected safely and easily in a skiff. At Famagosta he sailed inside the ruined mole in a corvette drawing seventeen feet of water, and he thinks that this mole, now submerged, might be utilised and a decent harbour constructed at a moderate cost. During all Captain Farrant's experience he never heard of epidemics on the island, and, when cholera was raging on the coast, the ship ran over to Cyprus to avoid it. Finally, he firmly believes that Cyprus, under civilised sanitary arrangements, would be a healthier spot than Malta. Mosquitoes are common all over the East, and it is probable that when the marshy lands are drained, Cyprus will be no worse in this particular than other places. It is as well that the fact has been mentioned, in order that the hosts of people who are preparing to start to make fortunes in Cyprus may take with them mosquito curtains.

Mr. Consul Laing says: The island is not unhealthy but demands simplicity in diet and temperance in habits.

INHABITANTS OF CYPRUS.

The male inhabitants of Cyprus are tall, well made, very hospitable, but not industrious. The ladies of Cyprus, famous in antiquity for their beauty, are handsomer, taller, and more stately than those of any other of the Greek islands. Their features are regular and dignified, exhibiting that elevated cast of countenance which is

so universally admired in the works of the older Greek sculptors. Paul and Barnabas, the apostles, were well known in ancient Cyprus; and there is still numbers of the Cypriot population which adhere to the Christian religion, such as it is among these people, and escape the rite of circumcision by bribes to officials. They are called "Linobombaki"—silk and woollen—a term best translated by our homely proverb of "neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring," meaning, in fact, neither Mussulman, Jew, nor Christian. The inhabitants, said to have been a million under the Venetian rule—though this is probably an over-statement—do not number at present much over 100,000; the larger portion of these are in poor circumstances, in consequence of neglect and defective administration. They have been slain, starved, or enslaved, and at the date of the Greek independence thousands fled to a freer rule. At present the Turks, who contribute only a third of the population, are a fanatical race.

LABOUR IN CYPRUS.

Mr. Robinson tells us, in his pamphlet* upon Cyprus, that the condition of the industrial classes in this island is not brilliant, yet neither is it destitute of some advantages as compared with the same classes in England. There is here no scope for ambition, but on the other hand, we do not find among the working classes cases of such extreme despair and suffering as are witnessed in England.

* Clowes & Son, 13, Charing Cross.

ANTIQUITIES OF CYPRUS.

The antiquities of the island belong to three distinct epochs—Grecian, Roman, and Christian. The period of the Byzantine Dukes lasted nine centuries ; and among many fine churches erected at that period is still to be seen the superb one of Machera. There is a conjecture, for which no ground is assigned, that the monuments of that period were in great part destroyed during the time that the island was held by Richard I. of England. The antiquities discovered in more recent times consist chiefly of statues, sarcophagi, Greek intagli, and scarabei—nearly all of which, excepting the sarcophagi, have relation to the worship of Venus, or more properly Ashtaroth, the voluptuous deity of the Philistines and Assyrians. In the Roman period, the island, as the reputed birth-place of the Goddess of Love, boasted of several temples in honor of Venus ; in which rites obnoxious to morality were performed. Among the trees which still clothe the sides of the hills and mountains of Cyprus may be found the sea pine (*Pinus maritima*), and the larch pine (*Pinus laricio*) and the wild cypress (*Cupressis horizontalis*) ; the Phœnician juniper, the oak, the carob tree, the olive, and the vine.

BEAUTIES AND PRODUCTS OF CYPRUS.

Murray's *Hand Book* informs us that the richest as well as the most agreeable parts of the island are in the vicinity of Cerinea and Paphos (Baffo). The consuls

and most of the European inhabitants reside at a suburb on the seashore, called by the Italians the Marina. Between the gates of Famagosta and Baffo, situated in a pretty garden, is a small mosque. From the summit of the minaret of this mosque the best view, it is stated, is to be had, the mulberry and palm trees being interspersed with minarets and ancient Christian churches, now converted into mosques. To the sportsman Cyprus offers a wide field. Its hills and valleys are swarming with hares, partridges, francolins, bustards, and quails; in the winter, woodcocks, snipe, and wild duck are in great abundance; muffs, or wild sheep, and wild boars are to be had at Cape St. Epiphanius.

The productions of Cyprus are as follows:—Cotton of the finest quality; abundance of the choicest fruits; wines unequalled by any other country; game and fish very plentiful; 10,000 tons of salt are realized on the sea-shore yearly. It is also rich in mines producing gold, silver, copper, precious stones; also a crystal is found near Paphos, which for its brilliancy is called the "Paphian Diamond." Lilies may be seen on the river banks in large quantities in February and March; and later on the island is covered with flowers, of which there are over one thousand different sorts, making Cyprus the richest in floral scenery of all the Eastern Islands. Colonel Leake describes Cyprus as one of the most beautiful and best cultivated islands in Turkey. The *Spectator* says, the island might be a splendid garden; that from the extraordinary variety of its climates it might be a sanatorium for the invalids of

Europe; and that it would be well if the interesting experiment could succeed of establishing a European colony there. We hope that will be found to be a correct description of the Island of Cyprus.

THE VALUE OF LAND IN CYPRUS.

We read in the *Standard* that it is stated that the value of land in Cyprus has gone up a thousand per cent. since the news of the English occupation was first known. This is very nice for the original possessors, and for the lucky speculators who forestalled the markets, but we cannot regard it as altogether satisfactory as regards the future. The former price of land was, it is true, ridiculously low, but it is equally low over the whole of Asia Minor, and people who had an idea of buying land in Cyprus will naturally question whether at this enormously enhanced cost it would not be better to invest in land elsewhere.

TAKING POSSESSION OF CYPRUS.

Sami Pacha, the representative of the Sultan, on July 11th, 1878, proclaimed the cession of the island of Cyprus to Great Britain, and Mr. Baring, secretary of the British Embassy at Constantinople, on that day formally took possession of the island in the name of her Majesty. The proclamation was very well received by the inhabitants.

Lord John Hay arrived at Cyprus July 13, 1878, accompanied by Captain Rawson and Lieutenant B.

Van Koughnet, of the "Minotaur," Lieutenant Eastman, R.M.A., Surgeon Macarthy, and Captain Riley, with a detachment of fifty marines.

The Admiral at once proceeded to the Governor's house, and delivered the following brief address:—

"In accordance with a Convention that has been concluded between her Majesty Queen Victoria and the Sultan, and enforced by an Imperial Firman, I am commanded by her Majesty's Government to occupy the Island of Cyprus in the name of the Queen, and to assume its temporary administration until the Governor duly appointed by her Majesty arrives. I understand that the Imperial Firman was read here yesterday in the presence of notables, and that you are now prepared to transfer the administration into my hands. On my part, I have to request that the Government *employés* shall remain in their present offices. Any changes that may hereafter be found advisable must be left for my successor to carry out. The police will continue to perform their duties as heretofore. They will remain under the command of their present officers, whom I shall hold responsible for the maintenance of order. I shall require all taxes and contributions to the Government revenue to be paid into the public treasury, on behalf of the Queen, and I shall hold the proper officials responsible for all moneys due to the Government."

This very plain and business-like address, spoken in English, was of course not understood by many of those who heard it, but it was very carefully repeated in the vernacular in its entirety by Mr. Baring, at the close of

whose translation the Admiral was assured that it was perfectly understood. The notables thanked the Admiral for his statement, endorsed his observation that they were fully cognisant of the nature of the Convention concluded by their Government with that of Great Britain, and tendered him, as the representative of her Majesty, the assurance of their hearty allegiance.

Lord John Hay and his staff then proceeded on their way to the flagstaff.

"I take possession of this island in the name of Queen Victoria," said the Admiral; and as the people recognised the well-known name of Queen Victoria they responded lustily in more dialects than one, "Live the British Queen."

The apparent ease with which the British Admiral went through all these formalities particularly impressed the Cypriotes. "One would think," remarked a native, "that he had been accustomed to take possession of "new territory all his life."

THE OCCUPATION OF CYPRUS.

"There is one point on which I can heartily and sincerely congratulate the Cabinet—whatever the merits or defects of this arrangement, there is one thing in which almost every one will agree, that it at least is better than the alternative of war."

(Extract from Lord Derby's Speech in the House of Lords, July 18th, 1878.)

Lord Beaconsfield* says: "I only hope that the House will not misunderstand, and I think the country

"This was thy work, to bid contentions cease,
Disarm stern war, and give the nations peace;
O'er subject lands a milder sway to wield,
And make with iron will the haughty yield."

Virgil.

will not misunderstand, our motives in occupying Cyprus, and with encouraging these intimate relations with the Government and population of Turkey. They are not movements of war; they are operations of peace and civilisation. We have no reason to fear war."

Sir Garnet Wolseley's commission as Lord High Commissioner, signed by the Queen, emanated from the War Office, the undertaking being in the first instance a military occupation. The commission is followed by a letter of detailed instructions, whereof a summary follows.

The letter commences with a recital that the commission empowers Sir Garnet Wolseley to assume in the Queen's name all jurisdiction and authority conveyed to her Majesty's officers by the firman of the Porte, and to administer the government of the island on the footing of a dependency of the Crown as far as circumstances permit. Sir Garnet Wolseley is to report after experience whether any future powers are required for administrative purposes, and how far the existing institutions are available for government under the Crown. Until her Majesty's government has fully examined the existing conditions, it is held desirable that the provisions already established for the general administration should remain in force, except laws and institutions repugnant to civilization or liberty, or except in certain special cases institutions repugnant to the laws and customs of England. Sir Garnet Wolseley is to announce himself appointed to execute the civil and military government, and to assure the inhabitants of the Queen's interest in their future prosperity. He is to direct the closest

attention to the means whereby produce and commerce may be increased, and the revenue augmented, and also to inquire how far the existing legal establishments are applicable to the new conditions. Sir Adrian Dingli, of Malta, assists with advice. Inquiry is enjoined into the organisation of the police system, and after consultations with the Turkish authorities, Sir Garnet is to ascertain whether a local or a general police is best calculated for the preservation of order. The establishment is enjoined of an efficient force, without undue predominance of race or creed. Information is to be gained respecting the public lands and the compilation of data defining the state of the Crown, ecclesiastical, private, and waste lands. All public buildings and works hitherto at the charge of the Government are to be taken over; roads, bridges, &c., reported on. Sir Garnet is to inquire into the revenue and expenditure, the sources of undeveloped revenue, the details of the system of collection, and the agency employed in financial matters. It being desirable to diminish as much as practicable the British force, the formation is advised of a local military defensive force.

For good or for bad we have taken Cyprus under our protection, and we are bound by the terms of our compact to pay the Porte an annual subvention equal to the average revenue it has received from Cyprus.

The town of Famagosta, situated on the eastern side of the Island of Cyprus, and thirty miles north-east of Larnaca, with which it might be connected by a narrow-gauge railway, offers, it is said, greater facilities for the construction of a harbour—and no

harbour exists in the island at present—than any other. A plan has been prepared by which an area of about 300 acres could be converted, with a certain amount of dredging, into a harbour, with a minimum depth of 27 feet, where vessels could lie afloat at all times under shelter. It is proposed to construct a breakwater to run in a north-north-east direction, of about three quarters of a mile in length, along the ledge of rocks, which at present affords a certain amount of shelter to vessels, and would form a natural foundation upon which to construct the work. These rocks in places rise so high out of the water as to leave comparatively little artificial work to be performed to complete the structure. This isolated breakwater would shelter the proposed harbour from easterly and southernly gales, while the trend of the coast on the north and east would protect shipping from storms coming from the northerly and north-easterly quarters. The estimate of the probable cost of the works, as made by the engineer, Mr. Hamilton Fulton, amounts to £500,000.

The Eastern Telegraph Company offer to lay a cable between Cyprus and Alexandria immediately.

The Anglo-Egyptian Bank has sent a staff to establish a branch in the island.

Sir Garnet Wolseley has already under his consideration the scheme of a financial company for introducing railways into Cyprus.

Emigration to Cyprus is the all-absorbing topic at Malta and Alexandria.

Three of the English consular judges will be appointed to judicial posts in Cyprus.

Sir Garnet Wolseley has been appointed governor at Cyprus, at a salary of £5,000 per annum ; he arrived at the island on the 22nd of July.

Sir Adrian Dingle, the local Crown advocate, accompanies Sir Garnet Wolseley to assist him in the administration.

Mr. George Kellner, C.S.I., late Accountant-General of the Military Department in India, has been appointed British Financial Agent in Cyprus.

Mr. French, of the Secretary's Office of the General Post Office, has been appointed Postmaster of Cyprus.

Mr. Robinson suggests and reports on the Customs.

The embarkation of troops has commenced. The entire Indian contingent, excepting the Bengal Cavalry, the 26th Bombay Lancers, the Infantry, and the M Battery of the Field Artillery, has left for Cyprus, also the 31st Company Royal Engineers, under the command of Major Maitland.

The following ships of war belonging to the Mediterranean and Channel Squadrons have been ordered to assemble at Cyprus, namely, the "Minotaur," flag ship of Vice-Admiral Lord John Hay, the "Raleigh," "Invincible," "Black Prince," "Pallas," "Monarch," and the smaller vessels "Bittern," "Foxhound," and "Salamis."

The "Himalaya," "Tamar," and "Simoom" will convey the British regiments; the Orontes takes General Ross and the 9th Bombay Infantry. The remainder of the Indians will go on seventeen of the transports which brought them from Bombay.

RUSSIAN VIEWS OF OUR OCCUPATION OF CYPRUS.

The St. Petersburg News says:—"Lord Beaconsfield disputed as long as possible Russia's claim to Batoum, and then at the last moment announced that, since Russia persisted in taking Batoum, England would occupy the Island of Cyprus. Russia, it says, is allowed to liberate Bulgaria as far only as the Balkans; and on the other hand the Slavonian countries of Bosnia and Herzegovina are given up to Austria. Russia is permitted to retain some of the towns she has conquered in Asia Minor; but England, on the other hand, establishes a protectorate over the whole of Asiatic Turkey, besides acquiring the Island of Cyprus—a splendid position in the south-east of the Mediterranean Sea, close to the shores of Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and the Suez Canal. Here England will establish strong outposts, and may easily station an army of one hundred thousand men ready to act either in European or in Asiatic Turkey. Cyprus, taken in connection with Malta and Gibraltar, will complete, in a very advantageous manner for England, her line of Mediterranean stations."

The Exchange Gazette states that "The surprise is one of which England will not complain. In uniting Cyprus to her Empire—we say uniting, because the conditions under which the Island of Cyprus is surrendered to England, and of which yesterday's telegrams brought us information, are evidently nothing more than a blind—she gains a very valuable possession. Cyprus

extends over 149 square miles, has 120,000 inhabitants, and is one of the countries most richly endowed by nature on the earth. Under the Turks its riches were of course turned to no account. But this will not be the case with the English. Then it has several fine harbours, affording good stations for the English military and commercial fleet. Thirdly, it lies along the great naval route through the Suez Canal to India, and is much nearer the Dardanelles and Bosphorus than Malta. Cyprus becomes for England a third station on the naval route from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. Since, in 1864, the Palmerston-Russell Cabinet gave the Ionian Islands to Greece, England, on this route, has only had two stations, Gibraltar and Malta. When Lord Beaconsfield purchased, two or three years ago, on account of the English Government, the greater portion of the Suez shares, England acquired in that Canal Company a preponderating influence. But between Malta and Suez there remained for the English a considerable open space, which is now broken by Cyprus. Fourthly, this island, from its proximity to Anatolia and Syria, is of great importance to England in connection with her protectorate over Asia Minor. And England has gained all this at the small cost of £6,000,000—supposing that sum to have been spent. It is not astonishing, then, that the English should be preparing a reception for Lord Beaconsfield on his return from Berlin—at so cheap a rate has he purchased Cyprus, and the right of exercising a protectorate over all Asiatic Turkey. The English people, fond of good bargains, will appreciate this.”

ITALIAN VIEWS OF OUR OCCUPATION OF CYPRUS.

The *La Perseveranza* says: "The occupation of Cyprus by England may appear to us a subject of regret; but it is as well to add at once that there would have been no probability of our acquiring it, nor any reason why we should do so, and that Italy would have been in no way able, in exchange for such an acquisition, to assume the immense responsibility undertaken by England, or to derive from it those advantages for the civilisation and happiness of Asiatic Turkey, which will certainly be drawn from it by England. Let us first render ourselves capable of great things, and then complain because great things are done by others."

THE ENGLISH PRESS ON OUR OCCUPATION OF CYPRUS.

" 'We avoided Egypt,' as the Prime Minister says, 'knowing how susceptible France is with regard to Egypt.' Nay, 'we avoided Syria, knowing how susceptible France is on the subject of Syria.' Thus was respect paid even to her sentimental interests, in spite of Lord Derby's startling assertion that a part of the Cabinet thought it desirable at one time to seize a naval station on the Syrian coast. Even the warm retorts to which that statement led did not produce a positive denial that such a project was mooted by some member of the Cabinet. But, as the Prime Minister says, 'we avoided availing ourselves of any part of the *terra firma* because we would not hurt the feelings or excite the

suspicious of France.' It would not be easy to show more clearly how much we value her friendship. No doubt Cyprus has been occupied ; but it is not easy to see how such an act can injure either the sentiments or the interests of France. She will scarcely pretend that Cyprus can menace Algeria, now that she has learnt to look with perfect calmness on the sight of the English flag at Malta. On the other hand, this country must defend its vast interests in the Levant, and the best way to accomplish that task is to occupy an island which, like Cyprus, has neither fired the sentiments of any great Power nor become the centre of political or commercial interests."—*The Times*.

"Again and again we counselled public opinion to wait for the end ; and, short always of a war, that end is better—far better—than could ever have been hoped for. Even as the Treaty itself stands, Russia ostensibly carries home little except the stained and shameful spoil of Bessarabia. Bulgaria will soon be quit of her, and Roumelia also, while in Europe she sees a new frontier erected for Turkey under European auspices, with Austria stationed upon its flank, and in Asia she has snatched Batoum and Ardahan and Kars, only to find the sword of England guarding the limits which she has thus reached. * * * and, if we add to the purview that resolute act of State, an illustration of which is furnished at this moment by the flag that waves over Cyprus, Englishmen have indeed every cause to be well contented with the part their representatives have played in a most difficult and momentous business."—*The Daily Telegraph*.

ENGLAND AND TURKEY.

AS we are to pay a rent for Cyprus of £150,000 per annum, and as the war indemnity in money is practically abandoned, we hope the Government will retain, for the English Bondholders, a yearly sum to meet the payments for the various loans, seeing that the English Plenipotentiaries declared that they could not recognise in the indemnity any claim of priority over the debts of any kind which were anterior to it in date. It results from these declarations that Turkey is not internationally bound, and cannot be compelled to pay any portion of the indemnity until the claims of all the creditors of loans anterior to the war have been paid in full. If the prosperity of Turkey should ever increase to such a height as to satisfy this condition, then the indemnity may be undoubtedly demanded. Turkey cannot be otherwise than thankful to England, for we have restored to the Sultan upwards of 30,000 square miles of territory, and two millions and a half of population; the territory being the richest in the range of the Balkans, where most of the lands are fertile, and the population being amongst the wealthiest, the most ingenious, and the most loyal of the subjects of the Sultan. Of course, everything will depend upon the future government of the country. As regards the civil part of the government, the Treaty arranges that it shall be matter of future arrangement, but Turkey has bound herself that the government shall be a good one.

“Under good and enlightened government, and with peace secured, Asiatic Turkey may no doubt one day become what it has been before now—one of earth’s fairest gardens. It has, however, for centuries been blighted by a vicious system of government, and, latterly, has been little more than a huge sponge, from which, from time to time, might be squeezed out the means of supplying the profligate squandering of rulers, or of carrying on war. History will probably mark as a red-letter day the date of signing of a treaty designed to give these unfortunate millions something like security against foreign aggression, and certain to result in improved government.”—*Globe*.

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AND

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OR,

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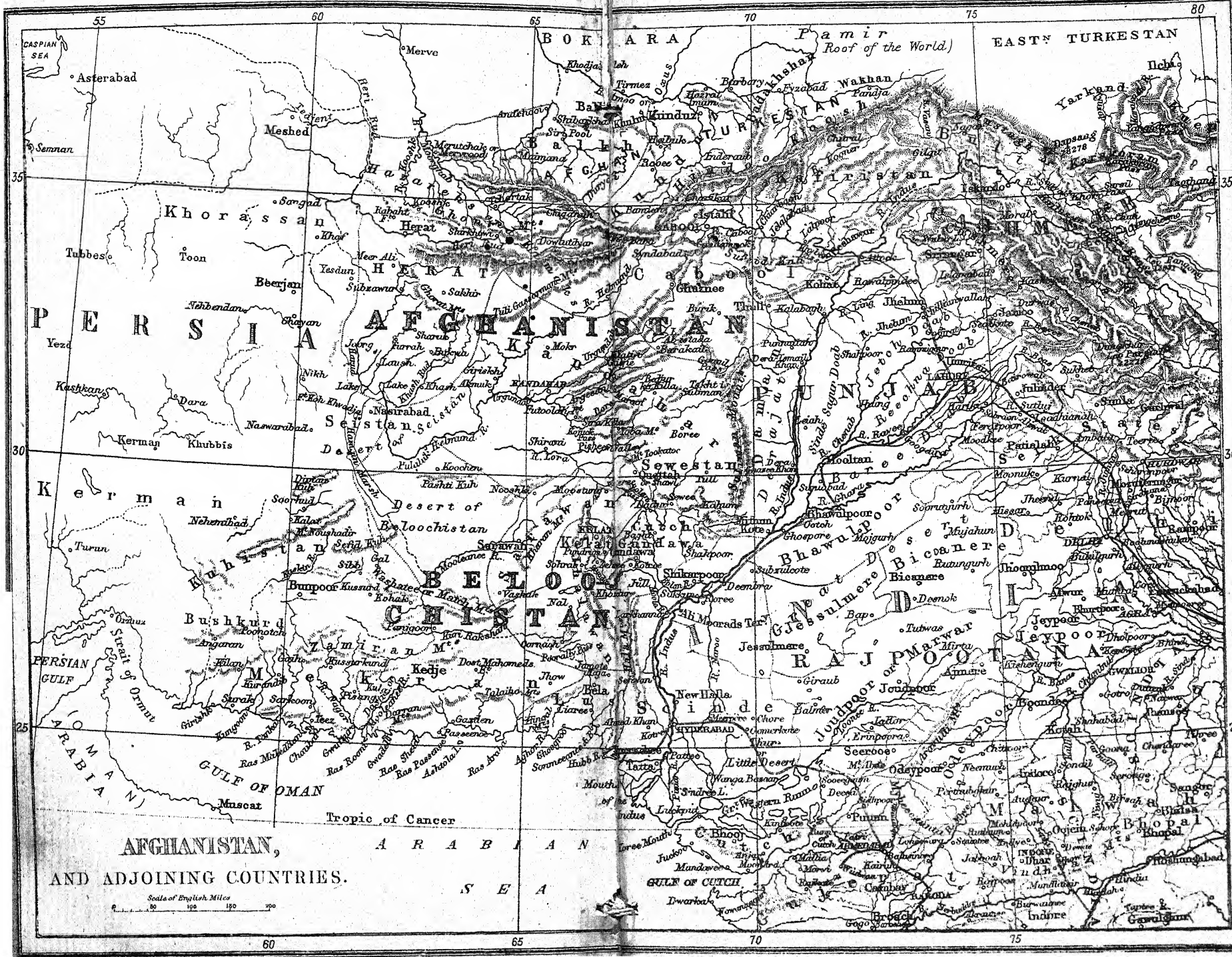
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AFGHANISTAN,
AND ADJOINING COUNTRIES.

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AFGHANISTAN;

ITS

POSSESSION NECESSARY

FOR ENGLAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CYPRUS."

WITH MAP.



LONDON :

DIPROSE & BATEMAN,
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AFGHANISTAN;

ITS

POSSESSION NECESSARY FOR ENGLAND.

Description of the Country—its Strength and Power—Habits and Character of the Inhabitants, together with the following Important Questions for the consideration of the People of England:—

THE DESIGNS OF RUSSIA ON INDIA—THE REPORTED PAN-ISLAMITE LEAGUE — THE GUARDIAN OF SOME IMPORTANT GATEWAYS OF INDIA — THE DEFENSIVE POSITION OF AFGHANISTAN — SHERE ALI—WHY RUSSIA ADVANCES TOWARDS INDIA—THE CZAR'S ASIATIC POSSESSIONS DO NOT PAY—THE FORT OF ALI MUSJID — GENERAL STOLIETOFF'S MISSION TO CABUL—RUSSIAN INFLUENCE AT SHERE ALI'S COURT—THE KHYBER PASS MUST BE FORCED—THE REGIONS CLOSE TO AFGHANISTAN—OUR BEING URGED INTO THE LANDS BEYOND THE INDUS.

THE DESIGNS OF RUSSIA ON INDIA.

IN the closing days of September, the alarming news reached this country that while a peaceful British Mission, under General Sir Neville Chamberlain, the Governor of Madras, was proceeding to Shere Ali, the Ameer of Cabul, it received a rebuff in the Khyber Pass, at the fort of Ali Musjid. The representatives of her

Majesty were informed that if they attempted to proceed further, they would be unhesitatingly fired upon. Everybody was overcome with surprise and anxiety at the intelligence ; but their feeling of self-respect was greatly gratified by the Government of India adopting immediately the most energetic military preparations throughout the whole North West of India. Nobody could believe for a moment that Shere Ali, who was indebted for his throne to England, could have thus acted of his own accord. And a glance at the following facts in the aggressive designs of Russia will satisfy the reader that the Afghan Khan was a mere tool in the hands of the Muscovite.

If Russia has been desirous of possessing herself of the whole dominions of the Sultan of Turkey, both in Europe and Asia, she has been equally desirous of possessing herself of our magnificent dependency in the Asiatic Peninsula. Her acts point clearly to this. On two distinct occasions in the present century she has meditated an invasion of India, by way of the Caspian Sea and Persia.

The opportunities presented themselves to her when England was in difficulties with another Power or engaged in war with herself. When Napoleon the Great at the commencement of the century had concentrated a large army on the heights of Boulogne, and was thinking of invading England, the Czar Paul, a monarch as enterprising, energetic and irrepressible as his two successors, Nicholas and Alexander, suggested to the French Emperor an invasion of India. Napoleon, who wished to accomplish one object at a time, declined the invitation. The Czar Paul then set about

carrying out the scheme by himself. He made Orenburg the head quarters of his expedition. There he assembled an army of Don Cossacks, the command of whom he entrusted to Count Orloff. In the address which he issued to his soldiers, these significant words occur : " All the wealth of India will be your reward in this expedition." The scheme was so far matured that the day was fixed for the start ; but six weeks before, the death of Paul occurred, and the invasion of India was abandoned by his successor.

After the lapse of forty years, Russia found herself at war with England. The opportunity again presented itself of an invasion of India. The Czar Nicholas ordered General Duhamel to draw up a plan of operations. What that plan was has never been disclosed ; but as Russia always works stealthily, by sap and by mine, not by bold and open proceedings, it might have been by first setting into play the machinery of treachery and intrigue, which is her common mode of doing things. That much was done secretly to undermine and endanger our hold of India is to be seen by what passed in Hindostan almost immediately after the close of the war in the Crimea.

While we were all sleeping in peace in the Asiatic Peninsula, and taking no heed about any peril threatening our great fortress of India, lo ! the enemy quietly and in the dark piled up powder barrels against the portals ; they were ignited ; and night after night in April, 1857, fires blazed everywhere in military stations in India. All Bengal became soon in a blaze, and all the North Western Provinces, right into the heart of the Punjaub. That this was part of the deep laid scheme

of the Czar Nicholas, few will doubt who have read what is stated in Diprose's "New History of India" (p. 46) : "The originators of the mysterious rebellion" (and they could only have been Russians), "had played upon the weak and credulous native soldiers with respect to their cartridges being steeped in cows' and pigs' fat." Russians were the "fellows in the garb of impostors, who, dressed as Fakeers, went up and down the country, spreading wicked fables" "that the English had defiled all the wells with matter impure to Hindoos and Mussulmans, and mixed ground bones with the flour, and animal matter with the butter sold at all the bazaars."

That this is the way in which the Russians always work, and that they are "mischief makers who know the people well with whom they have to deal," must be clear to all who watched the actions of the emissaries of Russia a year or two ago in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Bulgaria. "So they passed on from station to station" in India, "circulating their malicious falsehoods; and the words they dropped at the several European barracks were as dangerous as lighted matches dropped in stackyards." Their projects, however, were all, no doubt, to their speechless astonishment, completely frustrated by the energy, coolness and valour of Englishmen.

Nearly a quarter of a century more passed and brought us to the present day. Russia was so opposed and hampered in her war with Turkey by England, that she was unable to achieve her ends and gain the full fruits of her victory. What she had twice attempted before, she attempted for a third time.

Regardless of treaties which she had entered into with this country that the sphere of her actions lay without Afghanistan, and that she would on no account exercise any influence there, she despatched in March last a mission to Cabul which arrived there at the end of July. Shere Ali was taken into the confidence of the Russian Generals, Abramoff and Stolietoff, while the Muscovite Governor General of Turkistan, Kauffman, sent forward troops in two large divisions, nearest the frontier of Afghanistan, and, therefore, of India.

Thus the matter stands ; and thus, as it has been truly observed, (turn the compass as you may), the needle of Russian hopes has always pointed to India.

THE REPORTED PAN-ISLAMITE LEAGUE.

Immediately that vigorous measures were taken by England to punish the Ameer of Cabul for his daring insolence, the Russian Government, through its organs of the newspaper press, set about stoutly denying that it had anything to do with the conduct of Shere Ali. On the contrary, it stated that the Ameer was no friend to Russia, because he was a Mahometan, and was in league with all the other Islamite Princes in Asia, including the Sultan of Turkey, against not only the English but also the Russians.

Just as nobody believed there was a word of truth as to what the Russians had asserted, that they withheld from in any way dictating his behaviour to Shere Ali, so nobody believed in the rumour they set afloat about a Pan-Islamite League. It was to the effect that a secret envoy of the Ameer had been instructed to go to Con-

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stantinople, and there claim the intervention of the Sultan of Turkey to prevent England declaring war against Afghanistan. The envoy was also to convince the Sultan that an alliance with Russia was advisable. It was further stated that a secret embassy had been despatched from Constantinople to Afghanistan with the view of sounding the Mussulman population of Central Asia as to this Pan-Islamite League. By the 9th of October news reached this country that the whole story was a gross fabrication.

It was meant to be a remarkably deep move. If Russia had had to deal with children it would have been so; but all saw through it, on account of its shallowness. It was a feeble and fruitless attempt to rouse dissatisfaction in the minds of the Mahometan Princes who abound in our Asiatic dominion, and get them to make common cause with Shere Ali. Perhaps the only dupe of Russian falsehood and craft was the unfortunate Ameer. Not a single Mahometan Prince showed any inclination to join him; but, on the contrary, to keep aloof from him, and render every possible assistance to England. One of the first of these Princes thus to come forward was Rungbeer Singh, the Maharajah of Cashmere.

THE GUARDIAN OF SOME IMPORTANT GATEWAYS OF INDIA.

The Cashmere Prince in thus coming forward to join his forces with ours, acts under the impression made upon the minds of all the chieftains of India by the exploits of British arms. They rally round our standard readily, and leave to his fate any foolish prince who

defies us, as Shere Ali, well knowing that his power is sure to be completely broken.

Rungbeer Singh, the Maharajah of Cashmere, is an independent Prince, therefore his fealty to her Majesty is the more welcome.

The gateways of India that he guards are most important, and might, in certain eventualities, become of real moment. The two greatest of these passes are the Baroghil and the Karambar. Both lead over the Hindoo Koosh from the basin of the Oxus into that of the Indus. The Baroghil, which is 12,000 feet high, and has a gentle ascent on each side, goes by Yassin and Gilgit, and, though closed by snow for about six months in the year, is commonly traversed during the summer by laden ponies.

The Karambar, which is to the easterly of the Baroghil, is not a well-known pass, but, like the Baroghil, is one of the lowest of the depressions leading over the Hindoo Koosh.

Both passes have an exceptional importance in the fact that they constitute the gateways of India on the side where the Russian frontier may be expected to touch our own at no distant date ; and our having them thus guarded by the Maharajah of Cashmere's troops is a sign that the Government of India is on the alert all round the frontier.

An elevation of 12,000 feet above the sea level is an elevation where ice and snow always abound ; and these are sufficient barriers against any hostile visitors during the winter ; but the passages are open at present, and will remain so for weeks ; and as between them and the Russian frontier at Khodjend and Khokand

there is nothing save the Southern Pamir, the assistance of Rungbeer Singh is to be highly valued. His army is small, consisting only of 17,000 men; but it is well capable of keeping these lofty passes, the troops being all fairly drilled and armed.

THE MILITARY STRENGTH OF CABUL.

Although forty years have intervened since 1838, and many changes have taken place in the world, not much alteration has come over the little army of the Ameer. It still consists of pretty much the same number of men, about 16,000, the vast majority of whom, 13,000, are cavalry, 3,000 being regular and 10,000 irregular, 2,500 infantry, and it has 45 guns. The cavalry boast, besides larger numbers, a greater variety of weapons, including swords and "kindjals," matchlocks and rifles being only used in the infantry. The uniform consists of brown coats and white trousers, though the Cabul Government keeps at Peshawur and Scinde special agents to buy up all cast-off English uniforms, which some regiments wear.

THE ARMIES OF NORTHERN CABULISTAN.

The Ameer of Cabul is the feudal lord and sovereign of ten Usbek Khans, of Aktcha, Babusi, Balkh, Dyar, Kundus, Kylm, Lendai Sind, Maimene, Navasai and Shibbergan. The whole forces of these Usbek Khans number 18,150, of which 13,500 are infantry and 4,650 cavalry, with 29 guns. Only three of the Khans have guns, Kundus, Kylm and Lendai Sind, the Khan of

Kundus having 9 guns, Kylm 10 and Lendai Sind 13. The 13,500 troops are thus distributed : Balkh 10,000, Shibbergan 1,500, Babusi and Navasai 500 each, Dyar 400 and Maimene 100. Of the 4,650 cavalry, Balkh contributes 2,500, Shibbergan 2,000, Maimene 1,500, Aktcha, Babusi and Navasai 200 each and Dyar 50. All these troops are liable to take the field at the summons of the Ameer of Cabul.

THE MILITIA OF AFGHANISTAN.

In addition to these regulars there is a militia, of 156,550, a numerous force, Afghanistan being a country where every male inhabitant is compelled to take up arms at a moment's notice. As was proved in 1839, one-eighth of the entire population may be assembled, fully equipped, and sent out with the utmost despatch. By the side of this general levy there is a special militia, called Defteri, whose members have their names registered in time of peace, and are in receipt of a small salary, or a certain quantity of corn, or else enjoy the free use of canal water.

THE PUNJAUB FORCE.

Having thus seen what is the strength of the standing armies and the militia of Afghanistan, we will now consider whether, when the application of force is necessary, the means at hand on the north-western frontier of India are ample for complete retribution ; and against the military power standing to arms all down the line, a universal rebellion or an attempted invasion would make any head.

The Punjaub Frontier Force consists of eleven regiments of infantry ; one of guides, five of cavalry, two light field batteries and two mountain batteries,—in all 12,000 men. Being amply provided with carriage, the force can be mobilized in a few hours. Besides these, the minor frontier out-posts are garrisoned by local militia. These, of course, in a general out-break might fraternise with the separate clans from which they are drawn ; but their defection, while giving the rebels or invaders no material increase of strength, would not detract at all from the adequacy of the regulars to cope with the emergency.

The force at Peshawur is at present composed of 35,000 men.

THE DEFENSIVE POSITION OF AFGHANISTAN.

But it is to the defensive position of Afghanistan that we are to look. Now, almost every town and village in this country is surrounded by a brick wall, and may be converted into a defensive position. There is also a large number of small towers distributed over the country for the protection of passes, ravines and village grounds. Some of these towers, owing to their advantageous situation, are formidable enough to check the march of European troops, though none could hold out against a regular siege.

The most important fortress in the western parts is Herat, which is enclosed within a square wall, each side of which is 4,200 feet in length. The wall, which is of brick and protected by a moat, is 35 feet high, and stands on artificially raised ground. Northern Afghan-

istan is defended by the fort of Maimene, situated in a mountainous region, surrounded by a wall 12 feet high and 5 feet thick, and protected by a shallow moat. On the eastern frontier there are two strong places, Jellalabad and the Citadel of Cabul, the latter accessible only by a winding path, and capable of holding out against a prolonged siege. In the interior there are two important fortresses,—Ghuznee, which was accounted unconquerable before its capture by the English on the 22nd of July, 1839, and Candahar, large, but weak from being commanded by adjacent heights.

THE ROADS OF AFGHANISTAN.

All the important roads lead from east to west, and are merely tracks, without the slightest attempt at assisting nature. In the more open parts they are serviceable for vehicles and field artillery.

Taking Herat as a starting point there is a whole network of roads leading to Mashad, Merv, Maimene, Candahar and Seistan. On the road to Mashad water, provisions, and fodder are to be found in abundance, and this road, which beyond Kussan crosses the Persian frontier, has been repeatedly trodden by large armies with vehicles and field artillery. The road to Merv is a very well known track, and leads through a practicable pass and a valley to the borders of the Turcoman Steppe.

There are two roads to Maimene. The western, which is the shorter and the more practicable one of the two, traverses a well watered and cultivated country, where there is plenty of food for man and beast, and a narrow and easily surmounted pass. The road that

strikes to the east crosses the hills by a difficult pass close to the snow line. The way, which is free from robbers, is performed by horsemen in four days and by camels in eight. In going to Candahar the traveller passes along the spurs of the hills through a barren country, where there is little water, and that little not always good, and the road which is even is easily traversed by carriages and artillery. The way to Seistan, in the direction of southern Persia, is scantily provided with water.

One of the best roads in Afghanistan is that from Candahar to Cabul. It is easily traversed in summer, but in winter it is choked with snow in the gorge of Sher Degan for four months, and is passable only for pedestrians.

An extensive road traverses the whole of Afghanistan from west to east, proceeding from Herat to Badakshan, and, through a densely populated and well watered district, is practicable for artillery of heavy calibre. This, though the principal caravan road from Central Asia to India, is a track not without difficulties, being in winter obstructed by snow in the Hadskihaks Gully, yet heavy artillery up to 18-pounders have been moved along this road, and 6-pounders meet with no obstacle.

There is no lack of communications between Afghanistan and India. Three roads, from Cabul, Ghuznee, and Candahar, crossing intervening hills by more or less practicable defiles, reach the Indus Valley after traversing a good deal of stiff country. From Cabul to Peshawur there are five roads on both banks of the Cabul Darya. The road from Cabul to Kohat while not presenting any particular hardship to caravans, is infested

with robbers, and thereby much avoided, though it is the shortest cut between the Indian district of Kohat and Cabul and Ghuznee. The road from Ghuznee to Dere Ismail Khan, 323 miles in length, one of the principal commercial throughfares between India and Afghanistan, lies though formidable hills, and in some places is so narrow, as hardly to admit of loaded camels passing along, and in winter there is plenty of snow.

The road by which the English marched in 1839, and which is one of the three principal commercial highways of India, is that from Candahar to Shikarpoor,—a serviceable road enough, but having little fodder in the Bolan Pass, which is 90 miles long. The road that Baber, the Mahometan conqueror of India, chose for the passage of his army, was that which leads from Candahar to Dere Gazi Khan ; and although formerly trodden by whole armies, is at present abandoned, and only visited at rare intervals by couriers and fast caravans.

RIVER COMMUNICATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN.

As to river communication there is hardly any in Afghanistan. The rivers are torrents easily forded in summer. Only a few of them carry rafts. The only exception is the Gilmend, navigable for steamers from Girishk to where it falls into lake Khamoon. Its depth varies from 7 to 10 feet, and its breadth sometimes reaches 14,000 feet.

RAILWAY COMMUNICATION IN BRITISH INDIA.

As to the British side there is a very different state of things. We have now railway communication from

Kurrachee by Hyderabad to Sukkur on the Indus. Here there is a break, as the river cannot yet be bridged; but on the opposite shore the railway takes up again and runs to Mooltan, Lahore, and along the Ganges Valley, to Calcutta, with connection to Bombay. A branch line from Lahore, already completed as far as the river Chenab, is being rapidly pushed forward to Peshawar.

SHERE ALI.

Afghanistan, after the accession to the throne of Cabul in the summer of 1863 of Shere Ali, one of the younger sons of the previous Ameer, Dost Mahomed, presented almost as compact and independent a government as we could ever have hoped artificially to create on our north-west frontier. But the monarch who rules over the bare steppes and monstrous mountains of that inhospitable region, which must always be viewed with the greatest interest by Englishmen, was too impetuous in character to maintain the government long in that position. Perhaps he has maintained it longer than most would have imagined, considering that he has been upon the throne upwards of 15 years. His father always regarded him as the flower of the family, and publicly selected him as his successor, passing over the claims of his two elder brothers, Ufzul and Azim. And if it had not been that his many fine qualities were alloyed by an ungovernable temper, which at times severely swamped his judgment, he might have pursued the even tenour of his way in prosperity and success, being an adept in the arts of peace, as understood by his countrymen, as well as of war. But, unfortunately for him, his

political proclivities have all along threatened a rupture with England, for he has ever shown a disposition for any other alliance except an English one. He might have preferred a Persian alliance, but as fate has willed and circumstances determined it, it has been a Russian alliance.

THE AGGREGATION OF AFGHAN TRIBES.

The tribes ruled by this self-willed man are numerous, and each has its peculiar characteristic.

The Berdooranees, who occupy the north-eastern districts, and are said to number 700,000 souls, are quarrelsome, selfish, bigoted, and remarkable for vice and debauchery, but active, industrious and brave. They are an agricultural people.

The Gundepoors are a commercial tribe,—make annual trading journeys to India and Khorassan, and are particularly thievish.

But the most rapacious and treacherous robbers of all Afghanistan are the possessors of the upper branches of the Rajgul or Spendur Mountain, and who, deriving their name from the formidable pass of the Khyber, are termed Khyberees.

On the other hand honesty and orderly conduct mark the Khuttuks, a race occupying a barren, dreary, rugged country along the banks of the Indus, from the Cabul river to the Salt Range.

The tribes of Damaun are simple and honest; the Toorkolanees industrious and cheerful; the Storeanees, shepherds, and afterwards agriculturists (when their pasture lands were stolen from them by their neighbours,

the Cawkees); and the Babous are civilized and fond of merchandise.

These form the northern tribes.

The central and southern tribes are also numerous : the Sheranees, who are at war with all the world and plunder everybody ; the Jaudrans, who are disgustingly vicious; the Zmurrees, who are less inveterately predatory; the Vizerees, with powerful Khans remarkable for their love of peace, and a populace addicted to plunder ; the Dooranees, a pastoral people with patriarchal habits ; the Ghiljees, a brave and high-minded race ; the Zereens, great carriers of merchandise and (though not Afghans, but living on good terms with them,) the Taujuks, who are mild, sober, peaceable and industrious.

THE POPULATION AND AREA OF AFGHANISTAN,

The population has been estimated at 7,280,000, but it is possibly closer to eight millions, as calculations have been made without taking into account the Hindoos, who are stated to be numerous.* The extent of Afghanistan may be roughly estimated at 600 English miles from east to west, and 550 from north to south.

THE LANGUAGE HEARD IN INDIA TEN YEARS AGO.

According to Sir John Kaye in a most interesting article in the *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1867, the

* Colonel Macgregor stated the population to amount to only 4,900,000 souls.

following was language very often heard in India among numerous classes including military men :—"In a very short time the Russians will have military colonies on the Oxus at Charjooee and at Tukhtapool. From Charjooee troops will be thrown across the desert to Merv, and from Merv the fertile banks of the Murgal offer easy access to Herat. Simultaneously a large column will proceed through Tukhtapool and the defiles of the Hindoo Koosh to occupy Cabul. Persia, of course, will act in alliance with the invaders, and at Herat the force from Charjooee will be joined by large Russo-Persian reinforcements marching in from the shores of the Caspian Sea and the districts of Khorassan. Some delay must occur at Herat, for that city, as the key of the position, will have to be fortified and provisioned, and a chain of smaller forts at either side will have to be established, stretching as far as Tukhtapool in the north and Lake Seistan in the south. But the interval will be well redeemed by disarming the hostility and securing the co-operation of the Afghans. The darling dream of the whole nation is to plunder India, and Russia will offer them that guerdon, and the restoration of their old provinces of Peshawur and Cashmere to boot. Then some fine morning in early spring—unless timely measures of prevention are adopted on a scale far above the present Government's capacity to comprehend or courage to undertake—forty thousand disciplined troops of Russia and Persia, in conjunction with a countless horde of wild Afghan auxiliaries, will be launched, resistless as an avalanche, upon the doomed plains of the southern El Dorado, and there at once is an end of our Eastern Empire."

WHY RUSSIA ADVANCES TOWARDS INDIA.

We find that this talk is becoming now partially verified, and that it was all idle to believe, as was once believed, that there is room and to spare in Asia for both England and Russia. It was scarcely to be expected that Russia would remain contented with the five millions of square miles of snow known as Siberia, or with that extensive belt of land stretching from Europe to Asia, south of Siberia, or even when she pushed down her frontier south to the river Syr Darya (Jaxartes), obtaining thereby a more direct trade route from Europe to China and the east of Asia, or even yet when she possessed herself of the various Khanates in the third belt of her advance, south of the Syr Darya, and between that river and the Amu Darya (Oxus). We have indeed seen how recently her aggression has been gradually extending to the frontiers of Persia, Afghanistan and British India.

It is practically a wilderness through which Russia has pushed her way, a vast, inclement, inhospitable, unpeopled world for the most part, which, though interspersed with oases of fertility, is mainly steppe and upland, bare desert or rugged hill, fit only for the semi-savage tribes who roam about these regions. It is then a wilderness which the Russian people have conquered in central Asia, and it is a wilderness which does not and cannot pay them.

THE CZAR'S ASIATIC POSSESSIONS DO NOT PAY.

The occupation of the Provinces which Russia has over-run is purely a military occupation, and from such

a poor country she can never hope even to pay her expenses, much less realize revenue. Such is the latest word of Russian authorities themselves. Taking Turkestan alone, the most promising of all her Asiatic possessions, the income for the five years ending with 1872 amounted to ten and a half millions of roubles, the expenditure to nearly thirty millions, and the annual average deficit, therefore, to nineteen millions. Miserable as is this financial condition, it becomes even worse when it is considered how large a proportion of such income as there is is paid by the Russians in Turkestan themselves, and how little by the country; and when we add to the current expenditure all the preliminary expenses of military outfits and so forth, made in and paid by Russia, we need not go into further details; it suffices to prove the unproductiveness of her Asiatic conquests, that, besides the large initial expenditure upon her armies, she has to make up annually a large deficit. It is, therefore, seen that Russia is desirous of advancing,—except it be conceived that the impoverished Czar of all the Russias is quite satisfied with indulging an extravagant taste for conquest without the prospect of any remunerative advantage.

THE FORT OF ALI MUSJID.

The Ameer of Cabul advanced his troops to the fort of Ali Musjid, so as to be within three miles of Jamrud, where the vanguard of the British expedition was stationed.

Jamrud lies at the mouth of the pass, and five hun

dred feet higher than Peshawur, from which town it is distant some fifteen miles. Thence the road runs up the pass, until ten miles farther the fort of Ali Musjid bars the way. Ali Musjid stands on the summit of an exceedingly steep, flat-topped lump of rock, which appears to rise in the very middle of the valley. The road, however, winds round underneath the rock, which lies on its left. The rock upon which the fortress stands is too steep to be scaled from the front, and its fire is supported by that of a smaller fort built high up on the hill opposite to it. Both the forts, however, are commanded by higher ground on either side, and our troops, with their long-range rifles, could terribly annoy the defenders.

GENERAL STOLIETOFF'S ADMISSION TO CABUL.

Native Russian agents were busy at Cabul as long ago as 1875, attempting to set the Ameer against England; and they have been there ever since. The special mission of General Stolietoff to Cabul was resolved on in March. It was not, however, until the latter part of July that it actually reached Cabul, bringing with it a letter from the Emperor himself to Shere Ali. The measures contemplated by Russia were designed when peace between the two countries had practically been secured, and the orders with reference to them were not countermanded until last August,—that is, not until some weeks after the Berlin Congress had done its work.

RUSSIAN INFLUENCE AT SHERE ALI'S COURT.

When the first news arrived at St. Petersburg of the stoppage of the English mission to Cabul, the Russian ministers stated that they had no more precise information on the subject than the public generally. The telegram that appeared in all the European papers in the last week in September may very well have been the source from which the information of all parties at St. Peterburg was derived. But no one thinks that the temper and purpose of Shere Ali could have been matters of mystery to agents at Cabul, who were in actual communication with him, as they were matters of mystery to the world outside; or that the earliest possible notice about them was not duly sent off to headquarters at St. Petersburg. The inference is, that Russian influence was at work with Shere Ali, and that Russian influence induced him to refuse us a passage. The Russian Ministers of Foreign Affairs must have known all about the laying of the train and the lighting of the match; and all that we can believe in the matter is that, after the real business had been done, the Russian Ministers for War and Foreign Affairs knew no more than their countrymen as to the details of the explosion. Russia has had a part in exciting Shere Ali to hostility against England; but it was not at the instigation of Russia that Shere Ali gave us the latest proof of his hostility. The repulse was so ill-timed and so unwise in every way, that the Ameer's foreign advisers may claim to be acquitted of having suggested it. It has left us more free than we were before to act in our own interest, and has given a direction to our Afghan policy, which may prove to be of downright service to us.

THE RUSSIANS HAVE ALSO OUSTED THE ENGLISH AT TEHERAN.

The Russian representative at Teheran insists upon the construction of a road for heavy traffic between the Russian frontier and Teheran. In presence of the turn things have taken between England and Afghanistan, the Russian Envoy has requested the Shah to commence immediately the construction of a road between Araks, Tavris and Teheran, passing through Lendjan and Kasbin. The Cabinet of St. Petersburg has ousted the English, not only at Cabul, but also at Teheran. The Shah is believed to have contracted an alliance with Russia, in view of the events preparing at Herat. The fulfilment of the obligations taken by Persia is the cause of haste in completing military preparations. In four months Persia can concentrate an army on the Afghan frontier, commanded by experienced and skilled officers.

As for General Kauffman, the Governor General of Turkestan, he has been requested to send an estimate of the number of troops he can dispose of, as the course of events in Central Asia will probably shortly require a recruitment on an extensive scale.

THE KHYBER PASS MUST BE FORCED.

Peshawur, our nearest large garrison to the Khyber, is about twenty-five miles from both Jamrud and Ali Musjid as the crow flies, while the last-named fort is some ten or twelve miles from Jamrud. The Khyber Pass practically begins at Jamrud, and from the latter point to Ali Musjid the defile is very deep, is com-

manded by abrupt and most rugged declivities, but is tolerably uninterrupted. Suddenly there rises up in the way a tall, steeply-precipitous, and flat-topped rock or hill, and on it may be seen a few redoubts and dwelling places. That obstruction, monstrously strong by nature, and to the civilian eye impregnable, is Ali Musjid; and provided our people are successful in forcing their way from Jamrud, it is against this stern rock fortress that the English strength must first break overwhelmingly, or the gravest disaster cannot but ensue. The whole of the Khyber Pass, from Jamrud rising towards Jellalabad is twenty-eight miles, and of that—as Sir John Kaye has told us—some twenty-two miles was considered, prior to the events of 1842, “impassable for an army, when the inhabitants had determined to oppose them.” On the question of the native conduct nearly everything now turns, at least at the outset; and, unhappily, in the defection of the Momunds, and in the wavering manner of other tributary races there is plenty of room for fear that it will not be the Afghans alone we shall have to encounter in the much-dreaded Khyber. However, no matter what may be the cost in men, blood, and treasure, the Khyber must be forced sooner or later, for it leads direct to Jellalabad—“the key of the Eastern Afghanistan”—and to Cabul itself; but even if these places were of no importance at all, instead of being of the very first consideration, it is absolutely essential to the maintenance of our *prestige*, if not of our *raj*, that the Khyber should be in our hands with the least possible delay.

We can hardly hope that the whole of it will become ours before the close of the present year, but it is fair

to expect that Ali Musjid will fall a victim to our arms. If it does not, then indeed will every hillman in the North-West, every malcontent in all India, turn upon us with one accord, and render our task even a thousandfold more difficult than it is already. Though the main fighting, then, will probably be for the present year in more southerly directions, by way of the Gomul and Bolan passes, it is almost beyond doubt that the first encounter will be between Jamrud and Ali Musjid, and it therefore becomes well worth our while to see what was the nature of the contest over the same ground in former years.

CAPTURE OF ALI MUSJID IN 1842.

In January, 1842—when Sir Robert Sale was shut up in Jellalabad, and when the whole of our forces waging war with the Afghans were enduring reverses, tribulations, and sufferings of all kinds—Brigadier Wild lay at Peshawur with only four regiments of native infantry, one troop of irregular horse, and four or five guns belonging to our Sikh auxiliaries ; but the cannon were in such a state of unrepair that they were practically useless. Wild's ammunition was very scarce : he had little or no transport, his supplies were only poor, and his troops were depressed, if not absolutely disheartened, by the terrible tales of Afghan atrocities on British troops, which stories found their way from Cabul through the Khyber. In Ali Musjid, at the same time, was Mr. Mackeson—not “ Captain ” Mackeson, who was a more prominent man—who, with a handful of Eusofzies resisted all the attacks of the Afreedees, who were bit-

terly hostile to us then, though they are presumed to be friendly now. Mackeson had hardly any provisions; the water in the hill fort was so bad as to occasion disease, and it became essential that Brigadier Wild should relieve him, or the Afreedees would soon be masters of Ali Musjid. As a matter of fact they were already in possession of the two lofty hills which, on the south and west, commanded the place, and Mackeson had only two small earth and stone works, connected by a feeble wall, that he could call his own. At present it is pretty sure to be the case that those commanding hills are in the possession of Shere Ali's garrison, and if they are not well defended under the guidance of the best of Russian engineers, military opinion in England will be very much at fault. But to return: On January 15th, 1842, Colonel Moseley was sent from Peshawur with just half of Wild's brigade to succour Mackeson; but by some scarcely conceivable blunder, most of his bullocks were left behind, or were permitted to be cut off by the Afreedees and other hillmen, and though the relief managed to fight its way into Ali Musjid, that place was only stronger in numbers, while much weaker in means of supporting its defenders, new and old. Besides, no sooner had Moseley scaled the the rock and joined Mackeson, than every one of the hill tribes, many of which had up to then been quiescent, rose in dire rage against the British. All communication between the three posts—Ali Musjid, Jamrud and Peshawur—was at an end; and Wild, alarmed at the prospect, in attempting to join Moseley and Mackeson, was badly beaten in the Khyber Pass; or rather, he was beaten before he got fairly into the pass at all, for

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he had no sooner broken up his little camp at Jamrud, which he had reached the previous night from Peshawur, than the dreaded hillmen opened on him from their old-fashioned but excellent long-range guns, and the jaws of the defile seemed to breathe smoke and fire, gaping to receive the luckless sepoys advancing to destruction. These latter had been thoroughly cowed by the awful tales they had heard from the Sikhs. Many of them were ill ; all of them were young and green soldiers ; they, as Kaye has it, "wavered, stood still, crowded upon each other, fired anywhere, aimless and without effect. The officers moved forward, but the regiments did not follow them. In vain the Brigadier and his staff called upon them to advance ; they only huddled together in confusion and dismay. The Sikh guns, when brought into action, broke down one after the other, and the sepoys lost all heart. In fact, they were beaten, and they knew it ; the Brigadier and other officers were wounded, a number of the men were slain ; the column "retired" to Jamrud, and Ali Musjid remained unrelieved. Curiously enough, our opponents were then as far superior to us in arms as we hope we *now* are superior to them ; for while our men had only the wretched old Brown Bess, which never could possibly be relied on beyond 100 yards, the hillmen had fine long-barrelled guns, whose range was very long and accurate, and did great execution amongst our sepoys. Nevertheless, it was the common military opinion, and is so still, that Mackeson and Moseley might have held Ali Musjid for any length of time, had it been properly provisioned and supplied ; for the strength of the place is naturally so great that, even in spite of the

commanding eminences on the west and south, it is next to impossible to capture it from a brave and watchful garrison.

Brigadier Wild made a second attempt on the 23rd to relieve the gallant defenders on their rocky perch, but again he was defeated, and he also lost nearly all his baggage, his treasure, and some valuable munitions of war. The next day Moseley and Mackeson, in sheer despair, cut their way out of and down from Ali Musjid; but they did not reach the haven of safety at Jamrud before they had left behind them the bodies of two officers, and nearly 200 Sepoys. The hillmen took possession of Ali Musjid; they threatened Jamrud itself in such a manner that the British force thought it wiser to retire the whole 25 miles to Peshawur, and there they sullenly awaited the arrival of General Pollock coming up with reinforcements. It was not until April 5th, that any renewed attempt was made in the Khyber, but on that day, having before reached Jamrud, an assault in force took place, and was inaugurated with the greatest care and caution. The enemy, who had formidably fortified the hills leading to the mouth of the Pass, were in great force on both flanks and in the centre, and it took our troops all they could do or know before these fighting Khyberees and Afreedees were finally dislodged from their positions. Carefully driving them, once an advantage was gained, along the slopes, General Pollock pushed on his centre column simultaneously along the bottom of the defile; but it required the most tremendous efforts on the part of our men to climb the cliffs on either side, to pass safely along their tops when once gained, to fight successfully

the active mountaineers, who were, of course, quite at home in that style of combat. However, one by one all the local strongholds were captured, the route was securely covered for those below, and, fighting inch by inch, the hillmen were at length forced to give over the contest and disappear, and Ali Musjid was captured and entered the next morning.

THE REGIONS CLOSE TO AFGHANISTAN.

It will not be a waste of time to cast our eyes into the regions beyond, but close to Afghanistan, towards those vital strategical points which have made the Central Asian Question a theme of weight in Anglo-Indian politics. No point surpasses in importance, Merv,—the Persian name for the ancient city of Alexandria,—or Antiochia Margiana, the capital of Margiana,—in former times one of the most flourishing cities of Central Asia. Its ruins give a lustre to the trackless stream of the Murghab, which murmurs for a short distance and then is heard no more. The splendour of Merv is the departed splendour of an age when Bactria and the Seleucidæ were names to stir the blood of mortals :

“And Margiana to the Hyrcanian cliffs
Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales,”

was prominent in the list of the great cities of Western Asia. Yet although Merv has degenerated to a mere camping place of a Turcoman tribe, it still possesses many of those attributes which entitled it to rank with Balkh, Bokhara, and Samarcand.

The situation of Merv is eminently felicitous. It is the central point of the independent territory which lies beyond the frontiers of Persia and Cabul, and is halfway

on the journey to Russian territory. It is 300 miles from Khiva, 220 from Herat, 300 from Balkh, 150 from Mashad and 150 from Charjoöee on the Oxus. Russia is therefore within 150 miles of Merv.

The Russians have also made a fresh advance in another direction—one that is often lost sight of, but the importance of which is immense,—Kizil 'Arvat,—a position now garrisoned by their troops.

The importance of Merv to England is only relative. The city, far away in the Khivan Desert—the one oasis for many miles around,—would not possess much importance for us, save as the halfway house on the road from the Oxus to Herat. But Merv is considerably nearer to Herat than is Candahar, and it also outflanks the various provinces and towns of Maimene, Andchoöee and Balkh. Even if we were at Girishk, the Russians would still be nearer to Herat than ourselves. It is for these reasons that the Merv question still possesses an interest of its own, and it is as well to keep it in sight while the Afghan crisis is developing under our very eyes.

OUR BEING URGED INTO THE LANDS BEYOND THE INDUS.

It seems as if we are being urged into the lands beyond the Indies, there to take up a fresh and inexpugnable position. But there is a risk that if we make Cabul and Candahar our horizon, we may be forestalled in those places which are immediately beyond, and which materially affect the value to us of the Afghan State, according to its usually defined limits. It should clearly be understood that if we felt compelled to advance

as far as Herat, it would not be with the intention of sanctioning a Russian occupation of Merv. It would rather be with the intention of erecting a solid Turcoman-Usbeg Confederacy from Abwird to Badakshan, which should have its being from a grounded antipathy to Russia, who seeks to acquire the territory we should place in the hands of that confederacy. The Indian Government will do well to keep its attention steadily fixed on Merv, Balkh and Badakshan while it is dealing with Shere Ali in Cabul, for it is in those outlying regions that General Kauffman will seek to acquire a compensation for the loss Russian prestige may have to incur in consequence of a complete English triumph in Cabul.

INFERENCE FROM THE FOREGOING REMARKS.

There is but one thing for England to do, and that is to make ourselves masters, as soon as possible and for ever, of Afghanistan.

THE RUSSIAN PRESS ON THE CRISIS.

The "Boerse Zeitung," or "Exchange Gazette" of St. Petersburg, recently commented upon the situation in the following frank and outspoken manner:—

"If our constant advance in Central Asia has any fixed object—if we are to derive any real profit from our possessions there, and not allow them to suck our blood and exhaust our treasury for ever—we cannot remain neutral in the Afghan question. The problem as to whether we can protect ourselves against England's pretensions in the East can only be solved in Afghanistan. If the mountain passes continue to be under our influence, our strength in the East will equal that of the English, but if the passes go to England there will be no end to her claims and interference in our Central Asiatic affairs. Afghanistan is the most important strategical point in the whole territory involved in the Eastern dispute, and there we can oppose England most advantageously with every hope of success. We can oblige England to throw her entire resources into a war with Afghanistan—to play the Empire of India and the question of her political rank on one card—whereas war in Afghanistan would require hardly any effort on our part. . . . It is consequently in our interest not only to afford assistance to the Ameer, but to make his cause our own."

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OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

According to the author, the Annals are not history, but a romance to which the name of Tacitus was forged. The statements and arguments of the book will be closely criticised, for the subject is of great historical importance.—*Weekly Review*, May, 1878.

The work is likely to rouse a keen controversy among Oxford and Cambridge scholars. It is a curious addition to our classical literature.—*West Middlesex Advertiser*, May, 1878.

It is filled with elaborate critical arguments—arguments drawn from style, from peculiar usages, from such subtleties as alliteration and position of words, from coins, from inscriptions,—from all, in short, that it belongs to the most accomplished scholar to know.—*Spectator*, June, 1878.

The writer of the book before us deserves praise for the ingenuity with which he has sought materials to administer to the confident Latinists a gentle shock. His book is meritorious for its moral aim of not allowing anything to become too certain.—*Examiner*, July 13th, 1878.

The reader may find no lack of varied interest in the work.—*Academy*, July 27th, 1878.

The book is decidedly amusing. It produces the impression that the author is a pleasant and cultivated man.—*Athenaeum*, July 27th, 1878.

An instructive work, with much information about Poggio himself and his times, the state of learning in his age, and the search for and discovery of manuscripts.—*Lancaster Gazette*, August 3rd, 1878.

When we look over the evidence that the writer has given, we must say that he has made a fair case. We do not praise this book; it is above all need of ordinary literary approbation.—*Public Opinion*, August 10th, 1878.

Mr. Ross has a case; and the interests of historical truth will not be furthered until it is sifted to the bottom.—*Saturday Review*, September 7th, 1878.

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“ democracy is the attack which it is disposed to make on
“ local self-government, and the attempt to centralize power
“ in a form in which it may be most injurious. Look at
“ what has happened in France ! ” * * * *

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, at Leeds,
*April 17th, 1884.**

The London Government Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on April 8th, 1884, by Sir William Harcourt. He had not previously consulted or taken the opinion of any of the bodies which form the existing Government of London. These were permitted to furnish him with such returns and documents as he required, but he invited no suggestions in any case. To have done so would perhaps have been to invite a disturbance of the conclusions of the Firth-Beal policy which he had formally adopted as his own.

The Bill, if its spirit rather than its letter be regarded, breaks with all preceding policies and recommendations in the matter of municipal reform. Its provisions are long

* See the *Times*, April 18th, 1884.

and involved, but their tendency is simplicity itself. London, with its four millions of inhabitants, its world-wide influence, and its enormous wealth, is to be handed over to an uncontrolled Caucus with all the attributes of sovereignty.

The official allegation, that the Bill is the outcome of matured experience, and embodies arrangements which have been repeatedly sanctioned in principle, may be put down by a very plain tale. The Commissioners of 1837 in their report on Municipal Reform, while recommending the principle of *superintendence* by an undivided authority, added these significant words: "the only real point for consideration is *how far the duties for the whole metropolis could be placed in the hands of a metropolitan municipality, or how far they should be entrusted to the officers of Your Majesty's Government.*"

The question how far the Municipality is to be the controlling power and how far itself controlled by a power above and outside it, is as much the real point in 1884 as in 1837. Sir William Harcourt has provisionally settled the matter by providing no control whatever. Even the enthusiastic *Times* admits that the Local Government Board can exercise no control over the new Parliament of London.

The next Commission which dealt with the question of municipal reform was that of 1853-1854, presided over by Sir George Cornewall Lewis. This body, with seventeen years of additional experience to go by, condemned the principle of a single municipality, and proposed to substitute a federation of seven, presided over by a central body formed of delegates from each of the federal units. The central body was designed to secure despatch, and the harmonious working of a common policy. The Govern-

ment of the day declined to embody the scheme of the Commissioners in the Metropolis Local Management Act of 1855, but they constituted the existing system of Vestries, District Boards, and the Metropolitan Board of Works. This Act forms the Charter of the several bodies, exclusive of the Corporation of London, which the Bill now before Parliament proposes to destroy. Thus we see, that the Commissioners and the Government, while at variance as to details, agreed in the principle of constituting local authorities invested with original powers as well as with duties. Moreover, it was not the Government but its over-ruled Commission that proposed to constitute a paramount central body. The Metropolitan Board of Works was and is not such a body, its statutory powers being auxiliary to those of the Vestries, and limited both in scope and object. Hence, Sir William Harcourt cannot be allowed to ride off on the side issue of the rejection of the seven municipalities proposed by the Commission of 1853-1854. Still less has he shown that Mr. Buxton's failure to gain the ear of Parliament for separate municipalities in 1870 was due to the desire of the Legislature to affirm the principle of centralization. The parade of nominal precedents to which the public have been treated is, however, simply misleading. The one point of importance is that the personal views of two obscure agitators have been embodied in a measure which the Government intend to pass into law if possible. Sir William Harcourt's own position in the matter is peculiar, to use no stronger word. In his official capacity he strongly supports a measure destined to strip local bodies of every vestige of original or independent authority. His private views have found eloquent expression in the words prefixed to these pages.

It is unfortunately impossible to point to this Bill as

affording the first instance of a measure framed and pushed on in complete defiance of the whole body of experience of the subject matter with which it deals. The Ripon-Ilbert Bill for giving native magistrates extended jurisdiction over Europeans in India, has furnished an evil precedent. Having officially satisfied himself of the wisdom of his measure, Sir William Harcourt officially considers the matter settled, and opposition a mere impertinence.

The *Times*, which has supported the Bill from the very first, has made a final attempt* to prove that local self-government is possible under a system whereby a central body is empowered not only to decide what work (if any) the local bodies are to do, but to abolish the local bodies themselves. The writer of the article in question assumes not only that the existing authorities have failed to govern satisfactorily, but that their failure has taken such a form as clearly to indicate the remedy. "It will be "idle," he says, "to attempt to convince Parliament that "safety lies either in the way of several corporations, "or in that of a federation. The construction of one "paramount central body, directly representative of the "ratepayers is the *admitted want* of London." The word *paramount* is somewhat misleading in this connection. It is equally applicable to a central body forming a species of Court of Appeal, and constituted of delegates from local bodies enjoying original authority, and to a central body which claims from local bodies not advice, but implicit obedience to orders. It is the latter class of central body which is established by the Bill. It is not improbably the former class of central body, that is "the *admitted want* of London." But our writer clings desperately to his assertion that the new District Council will

* Objections to the London Government Bill.—*Times*, May 5th, 1884, p. 3.

have powers as well as duties. There is certainly little comfort for him in the words of the Bill. A more powerless and inane body than the new District Council cannot be conceived. It is to be called into being by the Common Council, if and when the Common Council pleases, and may be abolished at will by the same agency. The number of its Councillors, the nature and duration of its duties (if any), the amount of its funds, the extent of its District—all these things are in the absolute discretion of the Common Council. The very district officials owe no allegiance to the District Council.

What says the *Times* to this?—"The Common Councilors, *if they are wise (!)* will be glad to throw the burden of local work upon the exclusively local members, regarding it as their function rather to indicate the views of the central body, and to insure harmonious and consistent working." In other words, the wisdom of the Common Councilors will be to act as if they formed the central body of a federation of local units, a system deliberately rejected by the authors of the Bill. As recently as April 11th, the *Times* was much less sanguine as to the wisdom of the Common Council. It was then of opinion that, "if we were to judge by the analogy of the House of Commons, we should find it difficult entirely to suppress the apprehension that the Common Council might prove to be very reluctant to part with any substantial portion of the authority conferred on it. It is a natural tendency of the stronger body in any political system to overwhelm the weaker, *unless there is in operation some independent and antagonistic force capable of sustaining the vitality of the latter.*" The *Times* cannot, of course, have failed to mark that no such independent force is provided for by the Bill.

"It is true" continues the writer of May 5th, "that the District Councils will have no direct power of rating. In the eyes of the present vestries there may be in this *some loss of dignity*; but as far as the ratepayers are concerned, it does not appear that they have anything to fear from the change." It is probable that if the ratepayers cared nothing for the loss of that chief privilege of local self-government, the raising and spending of local funds on local needs by local bodies, they would care less, if possible, for the "*loss of dignity*" which the *Times* thinks may be unwelcome to the existing Vestries. But in fact, the newspapers afford daily evidence that the proposed abolition of the local rating power has aroused a storm which will probably wreck the Bill.

The writer further attempts to discount the impression created by Mr. Oakey Hall's testimony as to the abuses of municipal centralization in New York. An ex-Mayor of New York, who has seen Sir William Harcourt's plans realized in practice, and discarded as hopelessly inefficient and corrupting, is certainly worth listening to at this crisis. As he expresses it,* the Home Secretary's arguments "have been similarly used in America, have been there temporarily adopted, and have finally been proved in practice to be untenable." Centralization has also failed to commend itself to Boston,—the model city of the United States. To quote Mr. Hall once more, "the citizens of Boston prefer to deal locally with local affairs, rather than submit to the government of a mammoth Caucus."

But England is not America, pleads the *Times*. In England there is no wire-pulling or place-hunting; in London, politics and local government can never be mixed up together. "However brilliant the discussions of the

* In the *Times*, April 21st, 1884.

"Council Chamber, they will not compare in interest and *"prestige* with those of the neighbouring House of "Commons." These arguments sound strangely at a time when, as we shall presently show, the supporters of the Bill allege that Parliament does not represent the people of London.

The writer in the *Times* concludes by giving us the comforting assurance that the Home Secretary's control of the police, and the determination of London to keep her board of management in its place, will obviate any possible abuse of power by the Common Council. With the question of the police we shall deal presently, and as regards the "determination of London," we can only surmise that the writer intends it to be enforced by Judge Lynch. It is certain that no other controlling authority is set over the Common Council.

From the District Councillors, who may at the pleasure of the Common Council be either genuine functionaries, or lay figures, or mere figures of speech, we proceed to the 240 Common Councillors, about whose importance there is no question. Their work will be varied, heavy, and (nominally) unpaid. It is well nigh certain that men of honesty and character who have their own business to attend to cannot be obtained in sufficient numbers to give the Council the sterling characteristics which should distinguish a body endowed with such enormous property, power, and patronage. Consequently the large class of eager professional agitators and intriguers will furnish standing candidates for every vacancy. The suggestion that many of the new Common Councillors will be nominees of the large London contractors has been freely made and never disposed of.

It would be very interesting, were it possible, to learn

whether the Home Secretary has given any consideration to the question as to whence his new Common Councillors are to be drawn. He expects a good deal of them, for if they are only equal to the present vestrymen, this Bill will have failed in its object. Does he expect to attract a higher class of candidate by abolishing the ancient title of Alderman? Any "burgess" may be a Councillor, of either kind, and the qualifications of a burgess are humble enough. He must have been rated for 12 months, and reside within 15 miles of London. But, unlike the present vestryman, he may represent a ward in which he has no qualifying property, and may in fact be an arrant "Carpet-bagger."

A leading daily paper lately* pointed out that the same body of electors will have to return the Metropolitan Members of Parliament and the new Common Councillors. The best candidates for a public career will naturally prefer to enter the House of Commons, and the second and third best will enter the Common Council. As legislative material they will be "distinctly worse and lower." But for all that, they will wield an amount of spending and upsetting power which few (if any) unofficial members of Parliament, however eminent, can attain. It may even be doubted whether the new Common Council will not offer inducements to ambitious mediocrity far superior to those of Parliamentary life, for some of its attributes may be so exercised as to flout and defy Parliament itself. This danger remains unaffected by Sir William Harcourt's historical pleasantries. And here we may remind our readers that the Bill distinctly contemplates that the candidates for the 240 Common Councillorships and for the perfectly indefinite number of District Councillorships shall be men of the

* On April 25th, 1884.

same class, type, and calibre. By s. (16) of the Fourth Schedule it is provided that *the same person* may be a candidate for election both as a Common Councillor and as a District Councillor, and if he be elected in each case it is his election to the *lower* dignity which is to be void. Can it be doubted for a moment that the class of candidate to whom election even to the impotent dignity of District Councillor would be an extraordinary rise in life, will in every case make a parallel attempt to secure a Common Councillorship, which will constitute him an important friend or enemy to his neighbours?

The hopes and aspirations of the advocates of the Bill are as various and discordant as possible, and have in many instances no connection whatever with the present text of the measure. Sir William Harcourt has made repeated mention of *the housing of the poor* as a matter beyond the functions and powers of the present municipalities, but his Bill contains no allusion whatever to the housing of the poor. Whether he hopes to have his hand forced in the House of Commons by some sweeping amendment dealing with the question on socialistic principles is of course matter for serious reflection. Again, at the meeting of delegates from the vestries and local boards, convened by the Metropolitan Board of Works, at the Princes Hall, on May 8th, the supporters of the Bill expressed their warm approval of certain changes which they conceived to be authorized by that measure. One speaker hailed the new Common Council as the first municipal body which could "deal with the great Railway Companies." He was met with cries of "not in the Bill!" but was evidently of opinion that the necessary amendment would be readily accepted by Parliament. At the same meeting Mr. Mark Judge moved an amendment

in support of the Bill—worded to the effect that “the Common Council elected directly by the citizens, will “be better able” to decide for themselves as to the division of labour between the Common and District Councils “*than the Imperial Parliament with only 23 Metropolitan representatives*, including the member for the London “University.” Mr. Judge has most honestly stated that he hopes to oust the jurisdiction of Parliament in matters affecting the Government of London, and we recommend his views to the consideration of those who have pooh-pooed the very idea of political danger. A prominent female member of the London School Board takes exactly the same view as Mr. Judge. Last month Mrs. Westlake pointed out to a woman’s suffrage meeting that “women would under the new London “Government Bill have votes for the *new Parliament which was to be started for the Metropolis.*” One naïve observation of this character is worth a thousand official disclaimers.

It is indeed significant that all the points on which Sir William Harcourt relied as showing the considerate prudence with which the Bill had been framed, have been attacked by his own supporters. Amongst other things withheld from the new Common Council are the licensing jurisdiction and the control of the police. Moreover, some continuity of tradition and policy is secured by the incorporation in the new Municipality of the entire Board of Works and of one-fifth of the present body of Common Councillors. The Treasurer of the Municipal Reform League has, on behalf of his employers, denounced all these provisions. In a letter to the *Observer* of April 20th, the gentleman in question, Mr. Phillips, suggests that 23 members of the Metropolitan Board would suffice. As regards

the licensing jurisdiction, he complains that "large numbers of people *besides those belonging to temperance societies*" will be deeply disappointed if this jurisdiction is withheld from the Common Council. As to the control of the police, he remarks that "this essentially municipal function" (the command of an army of 10,000—15,000 men !!!) "is, with the exception of the City proper, to be retained by the Home Office, which means that Londoners are not to be trusted as the people of every other city in England are trusted. . . . It is an open secret that the Cabinet is divided on this question, and we may yet hope that timid counsels will not prevail."

In other words, Mr. Phillips' employers hope that an English Government will yield a point, which has in the case of Paris produced a standing feud between successive French Governments and the Municipality of the Capital. It is a point, we may add, which the weakest of French Cabinets has refused to concede.

It is perfectly evident from the discrepancies and inconsistencies of opinion and policy to which we have alluded, that the author and supporters of this Bill are completely at sea as to its ultimate scope and bearing. They are only at one in the intention that it shall bring about a general revolution, the effects of which may be indefinitely curtailed or extended by amendment. The adversaries of the Bill may take heart from the accumulating proofs that the prospects of this ill-considered measure have been most damaged by its own advocates. It is easy enough to meet the charge that the opposition wish to have no central authority at all. It is equally easy to meet the charge that the existing bodies are incapable of being made to work together. In the first case the "authority" constituted by the Bill is an unbridled tyranny, and its title of "central"

is ridiculous because it has no surroundings or satellites which need be taken into serious consideration. It is alone, and absolute, and all-absorbing. It is this species of central authority that the opposition have rejected, and no alternative or modification has been even hinted at by the responsible Minister. As regards the adaptability of existing municipal bodies, it is not the way to a working scheme that is wanting, but the will. The old material lies ready, but the official builder will not use it, except as rubble.

As matters stand, the papers which are anxious for the success of the Bill teem with expressions of doubt and fear as to the practical effect of its main provisions. The *Spectator* of April 12th, suggests that the Common Council should be controlled by the Privy Council, and puts on record its dread of "excessive loans raised under pressure of some humanitarian cry." The *Times* of April 9th points out that the Deputy Mayor created by the Bill, being a permanent paid official, will be invested with enormous power. "His appointment," we are told, "would be a matter requiring mature consideration." His election is however entirely in the hands of the Common Council, whose views of fitness may differ entirely from those of the *Times*.

The opposition to the Bill has united in one common effort men of all shades of opinion, including the enormous majority of the existing officials and functionaries with whom Sir William Harcourt proposes to leaven the first edition of his work. From the ancient Corporation of London to the modern London Workmen's League, bodies of the most various composition have denounced the measure as a clumsy and meddlesome invitation to disturbance and intrigue. The bogus character of the agitation which has

given the Bill its present shape is much better known to the inhabitants of London than Sir William Harcourt has any conception of. It is an agitation which is discountenanced and despised by thousands who have no love for Bumbledom, but who do not regard municipal tyranny as the only cure for ill-swept streets, bad gas and ill-laid pavements. From a political point of view Liberals and Conservatives have equal cause for disgust, though that disgust may bring them no nearer to each other in general.

Conservatives may regard the Bill as the supplement of the Franchise Bill now before Parliament; as an attack on the heart of the Conservative South of England. The City Fathers may declare that, had they returned four Liberals to Parliament in 1880, this measure would never have been heard of. But Liberals have no less to complain of. The principles of officialism, centralization, and irresponsibility, of which Liberals have been the sworn foes for centuries, are now formally approved by a Government which has the faithful support of all Liberals. As for the principle of local self-government, it is upon the ruins of this very principle that the Bill is rooted and grounded. There is instruction in its very title. The preamble of the much quoted Act of 1855 sets forth that "it is expedient that provision should be made for the better *local management* of the Metropolis," in respect of sewerage, paving, lighting and improvements. The Bill of 1884 is "a Bill for the better *Government of London* and other purposes connected therewith." Its title is at once "as simple as the guillotine," and as universally applicable.

We should have thought that if there was one truth which impresses itself upon the impartial observer, it is the truth that at the present day all organized public bodies

are gradually emancipating themselves from the control of that public which they are supposed to represent, and by which they are kept in funds. A School Board, started mainly for the purpose of supplementing the deficiencies of voluntary schools, has lived to put its own interpretation on the Acts whereby it was created, and to exact from Londoners tribute to an amount never contemplated at the first. Its members gain from their connection with this formidable organization influence and weight in spheres which are rather political than educational. A single railway company erects ventilators on a great public thoroughfare constructed out of public money, and maintains them there in contemptuous defiance of the House of Commons. Another railway company begins to join England and France by a submarine tunnel, and goes far to force the hands of the Home Government by an international agitation. Each of these great bodies has its serried array of directors, officials, lawyers, surveyors, contractors, and what not. The private citizen is helpless in their hands, and not least helpless when he appeals to a Parliament which is filled with their representatives. But all these bodies are as pigmies in comparison with the Municipality framed by the Bill in its present condition. It will be the absolute Government of a nation possessing 120 square miles of territory and a population which rivals that of Ireland and Belgium, and outnumbers that of Scotland, Canada, Portugal, and Sweden. Its freaks may shake the financial credit of London throughout the civilized world. The heptarchy of municipalities, ridiculed by Sir William Harcourt, may, perhaps, comprise more than one King Log, but are Londoners prepared to submit to the King Stork who now claims their allegiance? We have said, and we repeat that the units of a municipal system

are already in full operation, and we may add that they have earned the good opinion of Sir William Harcourt. It is often objected that a bare majority in a particular vestry can tyrannize over the inhabitants of a whole borough, and flout all the neighbouring vestries. There is a plain remedy for this—a Central Council or Committee, presided over by the Lord Mayor and formed of delegates from all the vestries, should sit as a Court of Appeal with final authority. It should also have original powers sufficient to enable it to modify local wishes by the general interests of London. In this manner minorities can be righted, and harmony and comprehensiveness attained in works and policy. A supreme body of this nature would be welcomed by every good citizen. Its institution would render many services to London, and amongst others, that of disappointing those sinister ambitions which will assuredly make themselves felt if the Bill should pass in anything like its present form.

H. A. P.

LINCOLN'S INN, *May*, 1884.

Since the above lines were written, the President of the Local Government Board has expounded the objects and purview of the Bill.* He has done more than this. Mr. Mark Judge's Amendment, which has already been quoted (see page 12), disclosed, no doubt unintentionally, his idea that

* See the *Observer*, May 25th, 1884, p. 7.

the new "Municipality" is to display political as well as municipal activity. Sir Charles Dilke has now again lifted a corner of the veil. After an admission that "certain matters hitherto dealt with "as parochial" are to be "centred in the elective "representatives of the Metropolis as a whole"—he proceeds thus: "But in another and a larger sense "the Bill is altogether decentralizing in its "operation. It takes away from Government "Offices and from Parliament, *which are unfit to "deal with them*, and hands over to the *elected "representatives of the Metropolis* such matters as "our gas and water supply, and that, in my "opinion, is decentralization. All those matters "for which the Metropolis is already one" (were this all, we should not quarrel with you, Sir Charles!) "it gives to our directly-elected repre- "sentatives. 'Decentralization,' as commonly "used, is a term which means '*We prefer our- "selves to the Home Office or the Local Government "Board.*' I agree in that view; and so does the "present Home Secretary."

Nor is this all. Sir Charles Dilke's speech is a clear corroboration of the assertion that the Bill cannot stand a discussion on non-party and non-political grounds. He has, at all events, found such grounds wholly insufficient to command even a prospect of success. He has accordingly sent the arguments of plain reason and common prudence

to join political economy and other recently worn out theories in Jupiter and Saturn. It is simply lamentable that a man of Cabinet rank should find himself reduced to recommending the Bill to a public meeting by such statements as these: "I repeat that there will be a vast majority for the second reading, and that *in obstruction lies the only danger*. Our continuance in office is secured by the division of our opponents, if it is not by any merits of our own, but those divisions, unfortunately, waste our time, for *the Tories waste the public time* in quarrelling and fighting among themselves."

Nobody, we venture to assert, who believed that a professedly Municipal measure was defensible on its own merits, would condescend to remove its discussion into the arena of general party politics.

H. A. P.